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Near East & South Asia

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Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Egypt, Syria Reportedly Differ on Ties With Turkey

NC0408102796 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 29 Jul 96 p 7

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite the pressing Arab need for distinguished relations between Syria and Egypt, a sharp conflict has surfaced between the two countries regarding Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan. Damascus sees in Erbakan a chance to improve Turkish-Syrian relations, which have been at ebb due to the Turkish-Israeli security cooperation, Syria's assistance to the Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK], and the water problem. Cairo, however, has expressed denunciation over Erbakan's sympathy towards the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] and his demands that the Egyptian regime revamp relations with it.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa visited Damascus recently to settle these differences and find a compromise between the two points of views. He left with a good impression.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syrian Arrest of 'Afghan Arabs' Confirmed by Jordan

MM0208151496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 2 Aug 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Muhammad Salah: "Jordanian Confirmation of Arrest of 'Afghan Arabs' in Damascus"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — A high-ranking Jordanian official yesterday confirmed what was published by AL-HAYAH about arrests in Syria which included a number of "Afghan Arabs," some of whom are accused of planning to carry out operations against "Israeli targets" in Jordan. This confirmation comes on the eve of a visit King Husayn of Jordan is expected to pay to Damascus for talks with President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted citing AFP]

Meanwhile, informed Egyptian sources have said that Cairo has received a report on the results of the investigations conducted by Syrian security services with a number of "Afghan Arabs" holding Egyptian nationality, whom Syrian authorities arrested last month.

The sources said that the interrogations revealed that most of them used noms de guerre to mislead security authorities in several states which they had frequented before settling in Syria. And that they took part in the fighting against Soviet forces in Afghanistan and then headed for Pakistan after the war ended.

The sources confirmed that the detainees admitted having links with Islamists of nationalities whom they met in Afghanistan and Pakistan. And that there is coordination among Arab religious organizations to overcome the security pressures to which members of these groups are exposed and also to secure the money needed to finance their movements and to ensure the safety of the elements moving among several states until a refuge is secured for them.

Syrian authorities last month arrested a number of "Afghan Arabs," among them Egyptians, Palestinians, and Algerians, and began to interrogate them on charges of planning to commit violent actions inside Jordan via Syria territory.

The sources said that there is security coordination underway between the Syrian and Egyptian sides to determine the real names of the detained Egyptians who are using noms de geurre, the cases in which they are suspected of involvement in Egypt, and whether they played any role in the violent operations carried out by members of religious groups in Egypt over a number of years. The sources declined to say whether the issue of handing these people over to the Egyptian authorities has been discussed by the two sides, pointing out that investigations involving the detainees in Syria have not yet been completed.

AL-HAYAH has learned that the Egyptian authorities have started to interrogate a number if "Afghan Arabs" who have been arrested in the country over the past two years with a view to determining their links with the detainees in Syria.

Security sources expect the interrogations to dispel a lot of the mystery surrounding the "Afghan Arabs'" activities in Egypt and the quarters to which they turned after they left Afghanistan.

A spokesman for the Islamic Information Bureau — a body comprising Arab Islamists residing in European states; it was the first to raise the issue of the arrested "Afghans" — said that the bureau "has played its part and performed its duty regarding the issue of the young Muslims arrested in Syria. And it has sought the intervention of human rights organizations" to determine the fate of those arrested.

It criticized "the hesitation — for some feeble reasons — of some individuals and groups in helping the young Muslims."

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League 'Warns Against' Israel's Settlement Policy

NC0408150696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab League General Secretariat [ALGS] has warned against the Israeli Government's grave decision to reactivate the settlement process in the West Bank and Gaza and its policy of expanding the current settlements and building new roads encircling Palestinian cities.

The ALGS said that, in addition to being a major obstacle to the peace process, this policy clearly shows the Israeli Government's intention to impose a fait accompli by Judaizing and seizing Palestinian land for Jewish settlers. This, the ALGS added, renders the final-status negotiations useless and ineffective.

The ALGS called on the countries involved in the Middle East peace process—namely the United states, the Russian Federation, and the European Union member states—to adopt firm stands regarding these Israeli policies, which contravene international legitimacy resolutions and the principles of international law. The ALGS added that it is making this call out of its concern for the peace process and a desire that the Israeli policy not frustrate the peace process and escalate tension and acts of violence in the Palestinian territories.

The ALGS also declared its firm support for the Palestinian people and their National Authority in the face of these policies and their serious impact, so that the peace process may continue on the desired path.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-NUR 24 Jul

NC0408095396

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 24 July edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-NUR that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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8. Columnists Criticize TV Programs
9. Chief Editor Views Campaign Against al-Azhar
10. Hamas Suicide Operations Said Not Jihad

AL-AZHAR ULEMA DENOUNCE LEFTIST CAMPAIGN

Ahmad al-Nahhas writes an approximately 3,500-word report on pages 1 and 3 on what he describes as a "ferocious campaign" against al-Azhar by "secularists" and "leftists." The campaign follows a ruling by al-Azhar's Islamic Research Academy recommending the banning of a book called "The Psychological Analysis of the Prophets" by 'Abdallah Kamal, a journalist with the weekly magazine ROSE AL-YUSUF. [see nc2407123496] A number of ulema interviewed by the writer support the banning decision and emphasize al-Azhar's role in defending Islam. Dr. Muhammad Ra'fat 'Uthman, dean of the Shari'ah College in Tanta, points out that creativity that is not regulated by "moral commitment" is a kind of "debasement in behavior and expression." He adds: "Among the ethical restraints required by Islam is to grant prophets and messengers a status that no other individual could attain. Thus, it is improper to make them the subject of psychoanalysis," he adds, because unlike ordinary people prophets are "inspired" and guided by God almighty and are free of any personal motives.

OFFICIAL DENIES ABROGATION OF FATWA COMMITTEE

An approximately 100-word report by 'ali Sabir on page 1 says that al-Azhar's Fatwa Committee, which is responsible for issuing fatwas, or Islamic legal rulings, on religious matters has not been abolished, contrary to a newspaper report citing a decision to that effect by al-Azhar Grand Imam Shaykh Muhammad Tantawi. The report quotes Shaykhs Fathallah Jazar and Mahmud Faraj, members of the committee, as denying a newspaper report to that effect. Shaykh Jazar adds: "We work starting in the morning and meet with dozens of citizens every day to answer their queries and give them rulings on issues related to their religion." For his part, Shaykh Muhammad Tantawi has expressed surprise at this "fabricated" report and denounced the attempts to divide the ranks of al-Azhar.

MOSQUE PREACHERS DEMAND IMMUNITY

An approximately 350-word unattributed report on page 1 notes that Shaykh Sayyid 'Abd-al-'al, head of the Mosque Preachers Union, has submitted a memorandum to Awqaf Minister Dr. Hamdi Zaqzuq demanding full immunity for preachers. In his memorandum, Shaykh 'Abd-al-'al stresses that preachers must be given assurances that they will not lose their jobs in the course of performing their duty or as a result of their call for implementing the Islamic shari'ah. The memorandum adds that granting preachers immunity "provides them with intellectual stability" and gives them freedom to tackle Islamic problems without having to rely on "political or security directives." The union believes that the mosques affiliated with private societies must not be placed under the authority of the Ministry of Awqaf without their request.

ISRAEL OBJECTS TO CONSTRUCTION OF MINARET

An unattributed 50-word report on page 1 notes that the "Zionist entity" has objected to the construction of a mosque minaret in the Egyptian border town of Taba. The Israelis, the report adds, do not want the minaret to be higher than 15 meters, citing "security" reasons. In an approximately 100-word al-NUR commentary under the report, the paper says: "It is strange for our cousins, who possess satellites with which they can spy on everything in the region, to find it too much for us to build a modest minaret, thinking that the muezzin will mount it to monitor Dimona's nuclear reactor! Citing security reasons as a pretext is a flimsy excuse to hide their deep malice and black hatred against Islam and its material and immaterial symbols, foremost among being the minaret, the symbol of monotheism," the paper concludes.

'ABD-AL-NASIR ACCUSED OF SHATTERING CONFIDENCE IN EGYPT

al-NUR Board Chairman al-Hamzah Di'bis, in his regular article on page 1, comments on the 23 July Revolution anniversary. In his approximately 2,000-word article Di'bis notes that on 26 July 1956 late President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal without consulting anyone. Di'bis adds that the 99- year concession given to the company running the canal would have ended in 1968. He states: "Had late President 'Abd-al-Nasir been patient for 12 years the Suez Canal would have returned to Egypt in a civilized manner and he would not have paid shareholders a single penny after the expiration of the concession." This, he adds, gave "colonialist states" the right to attack Egypt in 1965 under the excuse of protecting their subjects. As a result, the Sinai was occupied, the Suez Canal was closed, and 'Abd-al-Nasir emerged "defeated and helpless" from the battle, he states. Di'bis remarks that in addition, 'Abd-al-Nasir nationalized foreign and local enterprises in Egypt, thus destroying "confidence" in Egypt.

ISLAMIC OFFICIAL IN CHAD INTERVIEWED

Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Mahi, president of King Faysal University in Chad, is interviewed by 'ali Sabir on page 2. In the approximately 1,500-word interview, al-Mahi discusses the difficulties facing Islamic preachers in Africa in general and Chad in particular, the cultural struggle with the West, and the Muslims' duty in this regard. He notes the need to maintain close links between Chad and the Arab and Islamic worlds to preserve Chad's Islamic identity and undo the designs of the French colonialists and Christian missionaries. Referring to the "designs" of the West on the Arab and Muslim "resources," al-Mahi points out that to confront these designs the Arabs and Muslims must rid themselves of the elements of weakness imposed by the West on them, maintain the cultural and intellectual links that unite them, and avoid the West's customs and practices, which stem from its Christian culture that does not "suit the Arab and Islamic personality."

CALL FOR ESTABLISHING DANCERS' SYNDICATE RIDICULED

Ahmad Mustafa and Usamah Hamid, in an approximately 1,500-word report on page 8, view the call made by a certain "belly dancer" in an interview with an unnamed "leftist" weekly for the establishment of a "syndicate" for dancers, a call that has found sympathy among some "senior" writers. Noting that the natural place for such calls is the "garbage dump," the writers, however, put the issue before a number of ulema and officials for debate. Dr. Muhammad Ra'fat 'Uthman, professor of Jurisprudence at al-Azhar's College of Shari'ah, notes that since dancing is forbidden in the first place and is against "Islamic Shari'ah," regulating such a profession is also forbidden. Islamic thinker Dr. Ahmad al-Laythi notes that such a call is like "demanding the establishment of a syndicate for thieves and rogues to regulate their business and guarantee their rights." Writer Sa'd-al-Din Wahbah, head of the Arab Artists Federation, describes as "ridiculous" the call for setting up a dancers' syndicate. He adds: "Syndicates are supposed to be for respectable professions."

COLUMNISTS CRITICIZE TV PROGRAMS

Ahmad al-Nahhas, in an approximately 400-word column on page 8, and Abu-Bilal, in an approximately 500-word column on page 10, are both critical of the television programming. al-Nahhas is particularly critical of the television "commercials" featuring girls who, as if suffering from "kidney pain", are swirling and twisting, leaving one to wonder whether they are advertising a certain commodity or our "honor, principles, and ethics," he adds. He also wonders about the reason for screening the "Bold and the Beautiful" series, a soap opera that he says features "abnormal" social relationships. For his part, Abu-Bilal regrets plans by the television's first channel to screen an "adults only" movie at 0300, describing it as a "new catastrophe" to add to the television's list of disasters.

CHIEF EDITOR VIEWS CAMPAIGN AGAINST AL-AZHAR

Chief Editor Hamdi Shafiq, in an approximately 600-word column on page 12, comments on the "ferocious" campaign against al-Azhar in the past few weeks. He notes that criticizing the "bastion of Islam" in Egypt has become fair game and the "road to fame and fortune." He adds: "all you have to do is launch a campaign of harsh criticism and cheap attack against whichever Islamic sanctities, prophets, and companions you choose." When al-Azhar ulema stand up to you, he adds, individuals, societies, and organizations of "every color" will come to your rescue and you will become both "famous" and a "martyr." In addition, he adds, the news agencies controlled by "international Zionism" will run your story and in a few days you will be rich and your picture will be on Western television as a symbol of "enlightenment" suffering from persecution by "reactionaries."

Shafiq points out that it is no wonder then that "colleagues" in one of the "leftist" magazines have made it a habit to claim that their books are being banned by al-Azhar shaykhs. Explaining, Shafiq adds that according to his information these writers volunteer to inform the censors of violations in their books so that they become famous and gain the sympathy of the Western groups that are always ready to "shelter" them and fight Muslims in exchange for a few dollars. In conclusion, Shafiq calls on the government to strike hard against these writers, whom he describes as the "most dangerous types of spies," and to stand up to their "destructive ideas," which he says threaten to harm national security and destroy the future of this nation.

HAMAS SUICIDE OPERATIONS SAID NOT JIHAD

In an article on page 12, al-NUR Board Chairman al-Hamzah Di'bis continues his series of articles on fighting under Islam. He notes that one of the cases in which Muslims are permitted to fight under Islam is when they strive to regain their land from which they were expelled. In such a case, he adds, it is an "obligation by the Muslims, under the command of their rulers, to recapture this land, and this obligation remains outstanding until they fulfill it," noting that this case currently applies to Palestine and Andalusia, or the former Islamic empire in Spain. He adds: Since Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, is not a ruler of Muslims its launching of suicidal operations cannot be considered as jihad for the sake of God.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: IDF Declares Tulkarm 'Closed Military Zone' Following Riots

TA0208134696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] declared the area of the city of Tulkarm a closed military zone and is banning Israeli citizens from entering the city until further notice. This move follows riots that broke out in Tulkarm this morning.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that hundreds of Tulkarm residents are besieging the police station in the city, trying to break in and release Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] prisoners held there. Rumors spread through the city that a Hamas detainee died in prison after being tortured by Palestinian security personnel. According to the residents, the police had to fire in the air to disperse the crowd, but so far to no avail.

Palestinian Police have been called in for reinforcement from Nabulus and Janin, and the IDF has been notified about the incident.

Palestinian Affairs: Protesters Storm Tulkarm Bank Prison, Release Prisoners

NC0208140696 Paris AFP in English 1410 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tulkarm, West Bank, Aug 2 (AFP) — Hundreds of protestors stormed Tulkarm prison Friday [2 August] and freed dozens of prisoners as riots erupted in the West Bank town after a youth was shot dead by police, witnesses said.

Riots flared when Palestinian police shot dead Ibrahim al- Hadayidah as they fired at the crowd to try to break up a protest outside the prison by the relatives of those being held.

Hundreds of people from the neighbouring refugee camp where al- Hadayidah lived then marched on the prison, forcing police to retreat.

The demonstrators stormed the prison and liberated several dozen prisoners, witnesses said. They also marched on the police station chanting slogans hostile to the security forces of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat. Several gunshots were heard.

Staff at the Tulkarm hospital said about 10 other Palestinians were lightly wounded in the unrest.

Witnesses said the rally had started when the relatives of prisoners gathered in front of the jail to protest after rumors began circulating that several prisoners had been hospitalized.

They charged that the confrontation had been started by the police.

Palestinian Affairs: National Authority Statement on Hamas Storming Tulkarm Building

JN0208155596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1445 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Unscheduled announcement]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: A responsible source in the Palestinian National Authority has stated the following:

Armed groups from the Hamas Movement that infiltrated a peaceful demonstration staged by the relatives of some prisoners and detainees stormed the Tulkarm Governorate building and fired a shower of bullets. As a result, a resident of the Nur Shams camp was killed by a bullet.

Pursuant to strict instructions by President Yasir 'Arafat not to open fire, the security men refrained from responding to those opening fire to avert bloodshed, spare the Tulkarm residents any losses, and calm the situation there through the efforts of the city's notables. The armed attackers managed to storm the governorate building and took with them some of the detainees from the prison. This attack on the Tulkarm Governorate building reflects a scheme planned by Hamas' external leadership, and which was threatened in recent press statements by Muhammad Nazzal [Hamas representative in Amman].

The Palestinian National Authority, which is eager to safeguard the citizens' security and safety, wants its citizens in Tulkarm and the Nur Shams camp to remain alert and vigilant in order to thwart the plans of those who aim to foment sedition to promote the goals of the enemies, who are hostile to our Palestinian people and to their quest for independence and freedom. This is a sinful attempt to deal a blow to the accomplishments made by our Palestinian people.

The Palestinian National Authority will pursue the armed members responsible for the killing of the Palestinian camp resident and bring them to justice.

Palestinian Affairs: Tulkarm Riot Ends; 1 Killed, Over 30 Injured

TA0208162196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Police have managed to disperse the riot in Tulkarm and the city is now quiet. The policemen used firearms to disperse the crowd, leaving one person dead, two badly injured, and more than 30 lightly injured.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Palestinian Police commanders arrived in Tulkarm and met with local leaders in an attempt to calm spirits. Hundreds of residents besieged the police station in the city after rumors spread that a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activist died after being tortured by Palestinian security personnel.

The Palestinian news agency tried to claim that the man who was killed was shot by Hamas activists who mixed with the demonstrators and fired to intensify the violence. Some reports also say that the demonstrators broke into the jail and freed several Hamas activists. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has declared the area a closed military zone until further notice.

Palestinian Affairs: Tulkarm Governor Interviewed on 2 Aug Incidents

JN0208170196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1510 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Report by Mu'in Shadid in Tulkarm, and telephone interview with Tulkarm Governor Brigadier General 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif by Correspondent Yusuf al-Qazzaz in the studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yusuf al-Qazzaz] This is the Voice of Palestine. Dear listeners, we have on the line our correspondent in Tulkarm Mu'in Shadid. Mu'in, good evening

[Shadid] Good evening to you, brother Yusuf. The Palestinian national security forces are in control of the situation in Tulkarm following the riots that took place in Tulkarm this afternoon. The city has been placed under curfew following the fierce confrontations and clashes which took place here, which resulted in the death of Ibrahim Hadayidah. The Palestinian security forces are investigating his death.

Tulkarm Governor Brigadier General 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif; al-Hajj Isma'il, [commander of the Palestinian Police Forces in Jericho]; Brigadier General Ghazi al-Jabali, [director general of the Palestinian Police Force in Gaza; Brigadier General Jibril al- Rujub, [head of the Palestinian Preventive Security in the Jericho Region]; and Brigadier General Tawfiq al-Tirawi arrived in Tulkarm to closely follow up on developments.

Everyone here in Tulkarm is asking: In whose interest is what took place? In whose interest have properties been ransacked, furniture demolished, and cars set on fire? Hundreds of representatives of the various bodies and institutions visited the Tulkarm Governorate to voice their rallying around the Palestinian National Authority [PNA].

I am speaking to you from the office of Tulkarm Governor Brig Gen 'Izzal-Din al-Sharif, and a news conference will be held in a few moments in which the governor will address a communique to the Tulkarm inhabitants. He has just started reading the communique. [as heard]

[Al-Qazzaz] Brig Gen 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif, good evening.

[Al-Sharif] Good evening and welcome. How do you assess the situation now in Tulkarm?

[Al-Qazzaz] Thanks be to God, the situation is now calm. God willing, we will manage to overcome all obstacles. As you know, armed groups from the Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement that infiltrated into a peaceful demonstration staged by the relatives of some of the prisoners and detainees stormed the Tulkarm governorate building. Intensive fire was opened which killed one of the sons of the Tulkarm camp. Upon instructions by his excellency the president not to open fire, the security men refrained from replying to all sources of fire to avert bloodshed and to spare the Tulkarm residents any losses.

We calmed the situation with the help of the city's notables. However, the armed attackers succeeded in storming the governorate building and took several detainees with them. We tell these detainees to return to where they were. Otherwise they will be considered as fleeing from justice.

Of course, this attack on the Governorate building reveals a plan prepared by the Hamas' command abroad. Over the past days, Muhammad Nazzal [Hamas representative in Amman] and others issued threats to this effect. The PNA is very keen on safeguarding the security and safety of citizens. We urge all our people in all Palestine, and in Nur Shams and Tulkarm camps to be on the alert in order to foil any attempt to sow sedition, which will serve the enemy of this people and harm our independence and freedom. It is a sinful attempt to strike at our achievements and those of the Palestinian people. The PNA will track down all the perpetrators in order to achieve justice on the ground and establish our democratic state with holy Jerusalem as its capital, God willing, under the good man, our leader President Yasir 'Arafat.

In light of the riots perpetrated by the Hamas Movement today, we decided to impose a partial curfew on Tulkarm as of 1900 today until further notice. All the city's exits will be closed.

[Al-Qazzaz] Brig. Gen. 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif, all the people and the authority support you. In fact, we started to feel this among the people although the incidents took place only a few hours ago. People are dismayed at these incidents and at the attempts to undermine the PNA. Nevertheless, his excellency the president ordered that fire should not be opened.

[Al-Sharif] Yes, yes. At any rate, the security of all our people in this governorate as well as in all other governorates will be safeguarded. We will deal very firmly with all those rioters and renegades who have evil objectives. We are the owners of a just cause. We should achieve security and safety for all our people, God willing.

[Al-Qazzaz] We remain with you. Brig. Gen. 'Izz-al-Din al- Sharif, goodbye.

[Al-Sharif] Goodbye dear brother, thank you very much.

Palestinian Affairs: Commissioner Addresses Police Force on Tulkarm Events

JN0208175996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1640 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Statement by Deputy Political Commissioner General Brigadier General Khalid Mismar to the Palestinian National Security and Police Forces on 2 August—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother heroes, you have kept your weapons clean as has always been the case and as your leader and your people expect you to do. You kept your weapons clean although some renegades attacked your position with weapons. You abided by the orders of your leader, the leader of your people, brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] not to respond to the fire. Their bullets hit the body of one the sons of your homeland. Despite this, you restrained yourselves and kept your weapons clean.

Brother soldiers, NCO's, and officers, we will not permit them to stifle the dream and to sow the sedition your enemies dream about. Some Israeli Army generals who work against the peace process also dream of such sedition. They used to dream that the fire of sedition would ignite among the sons of the one people, that the fire of sedition would ignite too between the sons of the people and their national forces; the national security forces and the police. They tried this two years ago but you were lying in wait for them.

The incidents that took place in the Filastin Mosque in Gaza are still fresh in your minds. You denied them the opportunity. However, they did not lose hope. They and their agents abroad, who adhere to hostile foreign orders, kept sowing sedition. Our heroic forces and the masses of our steadfast and patient people together succeeded in foiling their conspiracies. Their sedition schemes backfired. However, they kept waiting for an opportunity. They exploited the martyrdom of al-Jumayyil in Nabulus to ignite sedition once again. They infiltrated the ranks of our people, who were on a peaceful march toward the Governorate building in Tulkarm. They opened fire and stormed the Governorate building.

However, the magnanimity and courage of our people, the sons of Palestine, the Palestinian revolution, and the symbol leader Abu- 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], demanded adherence to the orders of the leader to preserve the cleanliness of the weapon so that no citizen will be wounded, thus foiling the evil objective — an objective for which the renegades sneaked among the citizens. However, this does not mean that the masses of our Palestinian people and their security forces will allow them to wreak havoc on earth. They will be pursued and punished for their ugly crime against their people and National Authority. We will not condone their sin. And soon will the unjust know what vicissitudes their affairs will take. [Koranic verse]

Greetings to the members of our valiant forces, who preserved the cleanliness of their weapons; and greetings to our steadfast and struggling masses. Victory will be your lot.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Majority' of Escaped Prisoners Surrender to Authorities

JN0208190496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The majority of prisoners of Hamas [Islamic Resistance] Movement, who fled Tulkarm prison in riots sparked by renegade elements of the movement today, complied with the National Authority's appeal to turn themselves in before 2200 tonight. The prisoners turned themselves in to the Tulkarm prison administration in the presence of Deputies Mufid 'Abd-Rabbuh and Dr. Hasan Khurayshah, who made strenuous efforts in this regard along with other patriotic figures in the governorate.

Palestinian Affairs: Hadaydah Laid to Rest, 'Calm Prevails' in Tulkarm

JN0208193796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The body of youth Ibrahim Hadaydah was laid to rest in Dhinabbah quarter in Tulkarm today. Hadaydah was killed by a bullet fired during riots that were triggered by elements from Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] who mingled among people who were heading for Tulkarm Governorate building to inquire about the condition of prisoners held there.

The security forces brought the situation under control and restored calm. They seek to apprehend Hamas' elements who kidnapped the prisoners and detainees. Our correspondent in Tulkarm said that calm now prevails in the city and that the citizens expressed great dismay over the suspicious riots.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Sets Up Committee To Meet Tulkarm Officials

JN0308061496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat ordered the setting up of a high-level ministerial committee to visit Nabulus and Tulkarm Governorates. The committee comprises Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, Sulayman al-Najjab, Ghassan al-Shak'ah, al-Tayyib 'Abd- al-Rahim, Jamil al-Tarifi, Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Furayh Abu-Middayn, and 'Azzam al-Ahmad.

The committee members are expected to arrive in Tulkarm Governorate this morning to meet at the governorate hall with Tulkarm Governor Brigadier General 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif; the commanders of the police force, the national security force, the presidential security force, and the military liaison office; and the directors of the military intelligence service, the Tulkarm intelligence service, the preventive security force, and the director of the political guidance department.

The committee members will also meet with the president and members of Tulkarm municipal council, the heads of the national institutions, and members of the Legislative Council at the Tulkarm Governorate hall.

In addition, the committee members will meet with the heads of the municipal and village councils in Tulkarm Governorate and with the directors of Janin and Nur Shams camps. The committee members will also meet with representatives of the prisoners at police headquarters.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Chairs Meeting on Nabulus, Tulkarm Incidents

JN0308070696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat presided over a joint meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers in Jericho last night. The meeting, which continued until a late hour, was attended by Palestine National Council Speaker Salim al-Za'nun and Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray'.

The conferees placed special emphasis on the domestic developments that have recently taken place in the cities of Nabulus and Tulkarm. His excellency the president submitted a detailed security report on these developments. At the conclusion of the meeting, the following statement was issued:

The Palestinian leadership has followed the incidents in the cities of Nabulus and Tulkarm. His excellency the president informed the conferees that he has adopted firm decisions on the excesses that led to the martyrdom of youth Mahmud Jumayyil, a resident of Nabulus, and has referred the culprits to a special court to receive the punishment they deserve.

The conferees reviewed the incidents that took place in Tulkarm yesterday, as well as the incidents that took place in Nabulus. They decided to form a special ministerial committee that will head for the two governorates to address the situation there directly.

The statement asserted that the National Authority strongly wants to enforce law and order in all areas and to plug all loopholes that could obstruct this. It has the courage to take the appropriate measures against those who commit excesses. As a matter of fact, it has meted out the appropriate punishment against all violators in the past. Its policy and measures in this regard are based on the fact that it is the authority of the whole people that reflects their aspirations and believes in their right to a decent life in which the rule of law is upheld.

The statement added: The Palestinian leadership believes that the violations committed in Nabulus and Tulkarm are aimed at undermining the security of both the homeland and the population. This promotes the plans to undermine the prestige of the National Authority, weaken its credibility, and neutralize its ability to build the homeland and bring about stability. It is an attempt to scuttle the accomplishments our Palestinian people have made and hamper our quest for an independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

The participants in the joint meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the Council of Ministers drew attention to the intentions and practices aimed at fomenting sedition in the ranks of our people and killing our people's dream of building an independent state. The statement asserted that some elements upheld slogans that are alien to our people's code of ethics, to their belief in the prerequisites of national unity, and to their allegiance to their National Authority. Our people have identified these elements and isolated and condemned them, because they are tools targeted against the Palestinian option and the independent national decisionmaking.

The meeting participants deemed wise the president's instructions against opening fire on those who stormed the authority centers and ransacked private and public property in Nabulus and Tulkarm and the Nabulus Municipality, as well.

Additionally, the conferees decided to pursue those who committed these violations and offenses, which are aimed at destroying Palestinian accomplishments and dragging the National Authority into a side battle. The top priority of this authority is to liberate the homeland and establish an independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

The National Authority urged all sectors of our people and their nationalist forces to remain alert and vigilant against all elements, dangers, and premeditated schemes, particularly given the current circumstances in which holy Jerusalem and other areas of the homeland are being exposed to settlement expansion plans, land confiscation, and Judaization, and in which there are attempts to scuttle the peace process and the agreements signed, which requires all of us to close our ranks and promote our unity so as to confront them.

Palestinian Affairs: Prisoners Recaptured, Opposition Members Busted in Tulkarm

TA0308124496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Tulkarm, all 50 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists who fled prison during a mass riot in the city yesterday were recaptured last night and returned to jail.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that 60 opposition activists, mainly Hamas members, were rounded up in Tulkarm last night. The Palestinian Police claim that the riot was very carefully planned and that some Hamas members carried firearms.

Yasir 'Arafat is expected to visit Nabulus and Tulkarm in a few days to calm the situation. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: General Strike, Pro-'Arafat Rally Held in Tulkarm

TA0308125396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A general strike is being observed today in Tulkarm to protest the killing of a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activist last night by Palestinian Police gunfire while dispersing riots in the city.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the Fatah movement in Tulkarm held a rally of support for 'Arafat today, which was attended by some 350 local residents. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Ramallah Closed; Policemen Sentenced

TA0308143196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has declared Ramallah a closed military zone, banning Israelis from entering the city until further notice. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the ban was imposed in the wake of intelligence information that Ramallah residents intend to stage demonstrations against the Palestinian Authority.

A Jericho military court handed out long prison terms to three Palestinian security personnel who tortured to death Fatah Hawks activist Mahmud Jumayyil. Two of them were sentenced to 15 years in prison, and the third was given 10 years. [passage omitted]

Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has called on its military arm, 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, to attack what it called Zionist targets to revenge the deaths of Jumayyil and the Tulkarm Hamas activist. The Hamas call was sent by fax to news agencies.

Palestinian Affaris: 'Arafat Frees 23 Hamas Prisoners 'To Stem Anger'

NC0408110496 Paris AFP in English 1055 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TULKARM, West Bank, Aug 4 (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat released 23 HAMAS [Islamic Resistance Movement] prisoners here on Sunday [4 August] to stem anger in the West Bank where Islamic militants threatened an uprising against his self-rule authority.

"President 'Arafat ordered the release of 23 HAMAS detainees and they have been freed," the governor of Tulkarm, General 'Izz-al-Din Sharif, told AFP.

In another gesture, he declared a militant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) who was shot dead by Palestinian police on Friday to be a martyr, making his family eligible for financial help from the authorities.

The killing sparked riots in this West Bank town during which around 60 prisoners escaped. But they surrendered to police the next day.

"Among those released are people who run away and gave themselves up, as well as others who did not escape. They are all HAMAS militants," said the governor.

A senior Israeli military official, meanwhile, raised fears of an explosion of violence in the West Bank after HAMAS called for an uprising against 'Arafat's self-rule authority.

"The organised chaos of Yasir 'Arafat is preferable to total anarchy which could well impose itself," the official told army radio.

The radio said "the military apparatus in Israel is worried by a possible escalation of riots against the Palestinian Authority in the north of the West Bank which could spread to the centre and south of the territory."

Apart from HAMAS member Ibrahim al-Hadayidah killed on Friday, another Palestinian died two days earlier after being tortured by police in the West Bank town of Nablus, where demonstrators also took to the streets.

In a statement released late Saturday, HAMAS warned: "HAMAS considers the events in Tulkarm and Nablus as the beginning of a popular uprising against the Palestinian Authority."

The Palestinian militant group, which claimed responsibility for a wave of deadly suicide bombings in the Jewish state earlier this year, accused 'Arafat of "selling out to the Israeli occupiers."

HAMAS called for the release of its members held in Palestinian jails, hundreds of whom have been rounded up under pressure from Israel since the suicide bombings.

Three Palestinian policemen were given long prison sentences on Saturday after a hasty trial, also ordered by 'Arafat, for the torture of prisoner Mahmud Jumayyil who died.

Palestinian Affairs: Court Sentences Officers Responsible for al-Jumayyil Death

JN0308144096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The State Security Court, chaired by Brigadier General Fahmi 'Akilah, with Lieutenant Colonel Marwan Abu- Faddah, First Lieutenant Ahmad Abu-Dayyah, and Military Public Prosecutor Mahmud al-Bishtawi, as members, and which was formed on the orders of President Yasir 'Arafat, today issued incontestable verdicts against the defendents who caused the death of martyr Mahmud Jumayyil from the city of Nabulus.

After deliberations, hearing the defendents' statements, and reading the bill of indictment presented by the military public prosecutor, the court issued its verdict against the three defendents as follows:

Captain 'Abd-al-Hakim Hajju was sentenced to 15 years in prison with hard labor and expulsion from military service,

First Lieutenant 'Umar 'Abdallah Qaddumi was sentenced to 15 years in prison with hard labor and expulsion from military service, and,

Sergeant Khalid Ahmad al-Baddu was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Promises To Release Detainees Not Proven Guilty

JN0508063096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat said that the executive authority will firmly confront any offense committed against the citizens. He promised a Legislative Council delegation made up of deputies from the various governorates that he would release the detainees who are not proved guilty. The president received the deputies at his place of residence in Jericho yesterday and briefed them on the current developments and the viewpoint and efforts of the executive authority to contain the crisis by adopting a number of measures. He said he instructed the security bodies to strictly abide by the law in dealings with the citizens.

The Legislative Council members expressed their concern about the regrettable incidents in Nabulus and Tulkarm and their desire to act jointly with the executive authority, led by the president, in order to contain the crisis and emerge with a united national stand in order to confront the dangers and schemes being concocted against our people and their cause and against the National Authority.

Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet Official on Nabulus, Tulkarm Incidents

JN0308084396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0510 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Telephone interview with Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman, cabinet director general, in Jericho, by Za'al Abu-Rukbah, in the studio; from the "A New Day" feature—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Abu-Rukbah] Brother Ahmad, what are the most important issues that were discussed during yesterday's meeting of the Council of Ministers and the PLO Executive Committee?

['Abd-al-Rahman] In fact, the meeting had been slated to discuss the settlement issue and the political situation. However, yesterday's developments in Tulkarm and what happened in Nabulus on 1 August were added to the agenda and occupied a major segment of the Council of Ministers' discussions. A comprehensive review of what happened in Nabulus and Tulkarm was done. At the end of the meeting, a ministerial committee was urgently formed. It will go to Nabulus and Tulkarm today to investigate what happened and to take the necessary measures to rectify matters. This morning, the brother ministers began to arrive in Nabulus and Tulkarm to hold contacts with our citizens and explore the causes of what happened.

[Abu-Rukbah] We called Tulkarm Governor 'Izz-al-Din al-Sharif today. He stressed that the situation has returned to normal. Brother Ahmad: How will you confront the Israeli Government's decision to resume settlement activity? Have you discussed ways to confront the Israeli Government's decision?

['Abd-al-Rahman] First, the Israeli Government's decision is a flagrant violation of the Oslo agreements. In this respect, the Oslo agreement stipulates that no changes should be made on the ground. In fact, the Netanyahu government, which has been maneuvering for over two months, finally made to this decision yesterday. It is devious decision, and its bottomline is to unleash settlement activity. As I said, this a flagrant and unacceptable violation of the agreements. I do not need to state the obvious. Our stand and our people's stand is that settlement activity and peace contradict each other. So do settlement activity and security. Security will not be achieved as long as settlement activity continues.

[Abu-Rukbah] Do you believe this decision will affect the peace process?

['Abd-al-Rahman] The peace process is not only an Israeli and Palestinian affair. It is an Arab and international affair as well. The peace process heralded the achievement of peace and security in the Middle East—this vital region of the world. All the big powers and international groups are interested in the peace process in the region. This means that the Israeli player does not have a free hand and cannot unilaterally impose what he wants six years after the beginning of the peace process. It seems to me that the Netanyahu government is behaving as if it has come from another world. This situation will be internationally rejected. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Rukbah] Today's papers report that brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad are expected to visit Cairo. Did you discuss this issue at yesterday's meeting?

['Abd-al-Rahman] We have been notified of that. After he returned from his important visit to Washington and his meeting with President Bill Clinton and Congress leaders, President Husni Mubarak, as usual, requested a meeting with President Abu-'Ammar. Based on this, the president may visit Cairo within two or three days to meet with his brother President Husni Mubarak to learn about the U.S. position from more than one party. We are in touch with the Americans and received messages about their position after their meeting with Netanyahu. Although the presidential elections are nearing, these messages indicate that the Americans are dissatisfied with Netanyahu's policy. However, this has not been made absolutely clear. They can only deal with Netanyahu as they did with Shamir. You recall that Shamir was rejected by the Israeli voters when they discovered that he was leading them into a confrontation with the United States. The Israeli people know that their lives are in the Americans' hands and that their lifeline comes from the United States. First and foremost, the ball is in the U.S. court.

This does not exempt us from our daily duty on the ground. It is not enough to call for a Security Council meeting or to send messages to Clinton and Yeltsin. The issue is more important. All our people and the Authority must stick to their land. In fact, I thought you would focus more on Tulkarm and what happened there. I do not know why you did not ask about that.

[Abu-Rukbah] I intend to go back and ask about the Tulkarm issue.

['Abd-al-Rahman] Yes. This is a very important issue. Our people must know what had happened.

[Abu-Rukbah] Yes. Will you disclose the final results of the investigations into what happened in Nabulus and Tulkarm?

['Abd-al-Rahman] First, what happened in Nabulus is completely different from what happened in Tulkarm. What happened in Nabulus was a crime committed by individuals who wear official uniforms and work for our security or military institution. This does not exempt them from being subject to law, however. They will face the State Security Court. The results and the names will be announced as soon as possible. It must be clear that the Authority cannot establish a strong relationship with the masses without clarity and frankness. A crime took place. A crime may take place anywhere in the world. What counts is accountability and punishing those who commit offenses. Some misconceptions have prevailed about us. It is believed that if someone commits an offense, he is put in jail by the Authority for a couple of days before he is released after being tapped on the shoulder. This is as if it were a joke.

[Abu-Rukbah] We want to prove the contrary?

['Abd-al-Rahman] This picture is prevalent because of the nature of the Palestinian social fabric, in which people are viewed as brothers, cousins, friends, countrymen, relatives, and so on. This image is from the pre-state society. We are establishing a state on the basis of law. The law must be respected by the state agencies before citizens are asked to do so. Hence, we have placed emphasis on what happened in Nabulus and Tulkarm. We want to rebuild ourselves and review what is taking place. We want to determine how the citizen-policeman relationship, for example, should be. In all states of the world, policemen are to serve citizens.

[Abu-Rukbah] Rather than being a sword brandished against them?

['Abd-al-Rahman] Definitely not. I do not want to say we are the Switzerland of the East or a utopia.

[Abu-Rukbah] Yes. Some mistakes do take place.

['Abd-al-Rahim] We are committed to principles that maintain citizens' security and rights, and ensure respect for the authority men and not committing excesses. Nobody of us could believe, for example, that anybody, even Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members could direct such an insult to the Authority yesterday. They stormed the governorate hall and released prisoners, as if the Tulkarm governorate hall were the Bastille. It is not the Bastille, nor is it like the dens of Caesarean prisons. It is a place where suspects are held pending trial. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Ministerial Committee Member Cited on Tulkarm Meetings

JN0308172296 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidency and member of the ministerial committee entrusted with following up the incidents in Tulkarm and Nabulus, said that the committee will submit its reports to President Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO Executive Committee, the Council of Ministers, the Palestine National Council, and the Palestinian Legislative Council.

In a statement to our radio at the end of the committee's meetings with the heads of the state and security organs and representatives of the popular and official institutions in the Tulkarm Governorate, 'Abd-al-Rahim noted that the committee listened to a detailed briefing on the aggression which was carried out against the Tulkarm Governorate in which youth Ibrahim Habayibah was killed.

He stressed that the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] will prevent such acts of violence. He added that the PNA has enough power to put an end to violations and to bring violators to account.

'Azzam al-Ahmad, public works minister and member of the ministerial committee, said that the PNA is for all the Palestinian people, calling on the people not to be driven by emotions.

Justice Minister Frayh Abu-Middayn called for adhering to national unity to confront the many challenges facing our Palestinian people and the peace process.

A mammoth demonstration was staged in Tulkarm today. The demonstrators marched through the city's streets expressing support for the PNA and denouncing the renegade elements who seek to foment sedition among our people.

The Legislative Council decided to form a fact-finding committee to discuss the incidents which took place in Nabulus. The committee comprises deputies Nahid al-Rayyis, Hasan 'Asfur, Kamal al-Shurafi, Fakhri Shaqqurah, Salah al-Ta'mari, Rashad al-Kasir, and Marwan Kanafani. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Denies Killing Protester, Warns of Uprising

NC0208175196 Paris AFP in English
1754 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, Aug 2 (AFP) — The radical Islamic group Hamas Friday [2 August] brushed aside accusations by the Palestinian Authority that its members killed a man protesting outside Tulkarm jail, and warned of a wide-scale intifadah, or uprising.

Amman-based Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah said the PA was inciting "Palestinians against Hamas by falsely accusing the movement of killing" 44-year-old Ibrahim al-Hadayidah.

"We urge all sane members of the PA to rein in agents so they stop shooting toward our youths' chests, otherwise Tulkarm's incidents could turn into a new popular intifadah against the PA and the Zionist occupation," Ghawshah told AFP.

The PA had said a "small Hamas group whipped up trouble during a peaceful demonstration by relatives of prisoners and broke into the police headquarters."

Witnesses said Palestinian police shot dead al-Hadayidah, a Hamas militant, as they fired into the crowd to try to break up the protest outside the prison led by the relatives of hunger-striking detainees.

After the shooting demonstrators stormed the prison and liberated scores of prisoners and marched on the police station chanting slogans hostile to the security forces of 'Arafat, they added.

Crowds had gathered outside the jail after Hamas leaflets distributed in Tulkarm earlier Friday said several Hamas prisoners on hunger strike were "close to death."

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas' al-Zahhar Calls For 'Neutral Committee' on Incidents

JN0308141896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1100 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, a prominent Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader in the Palestinian territories, has his own views on the causes that led to an intra-Palestinian confrontation in Tulkarm yesterday. Responding to our questions, Mahmud al-Zahhar said:

[Begin recording] [Al-Zahhar] First, I want to emphasize that such incidents are expected to take place any moment, especially in view of the prolonged detention of Hamas activists since March. We met with the [Palestinian] Authority leadership more than once and called for releasing all detainees. As you know, the atmosphere was extremely charged following the Nabulus incidents in the wake of al-Jumayyil's death. The following day, the world heard about the death of another person and the injury of others. The detainees' families took to the streets and demanded the release of their sons, especially since a sense of despair has prevailed among the Palestinians, and among the families of detainees in particular. The Consultative Council approved the release of the detainees. This was also endorsed by the Council of Ministers. Yet, so far, nobody was released. On the contrary, new detentions took place in some areas. We believe that in order to emerge from this crisis — for this is not the time for conflicts — all Hamas and Islamic Jihad detainees must be released and a new leaf of constructive dialogue must be opened to find a formula for a future relationship, especially since the intentions of the Netanyahu government and settlers have been revealed. Important and crucial issues, such as Jerusalem, the right to repatriation, and settlements must be addressed.

[Unidentified correspondent] Dr. al-Zahhar, who started the shoot-out in Tulkarm yesterday and caused the fall of a Palestinian victim?

[Al-Zahhar] In fact, there is more than one story. The Authority's official story says that an armed force came to release the detainees. Information we received from the West bank says that the shot youth and two of his brothers were detained and that the argument began inside the prison and that fire was opened from inside the prison, not from outside. Consequently, when they heard about the incident, the masses moved to release the remainder of the detainees. In order to settle this issue, I believe a neutral committee must be set up to study this subject and to issue its recommendations and conclusions within a specific timeframe to clarify the circumstances of the incidents. We do not want this war of words to be the prevalent feature of the coming stage because this is not in the interest of the Palestinians in general. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Calls For Uprising Against 'Arafat

NC0308180496 Paris AFP in English 1748 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, June 3 (AFP) — The Islamic militant group Hamas called Saturday [3 August] for an uprising against the Palestinian Authority and more anti-Israeli attacks after Palestinian police killed two men this week in the autonomous areas.

The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) accused Yasir 'Arafat's Palestinian Authority of "selling out to Israeli occupiers" and "depriving Palestinians of their rights" by serving the interests of the Jewish state.

A Palestinian died Wednesday after being tortured by police while in detention in the West Bank town of Nabulus, and a Hamas member was shot dead Friday by Palestinian police during a riot outside the prison in Tulkarm.

"Hamas considers the events in Tulkarm and Nabulus as the beginning of a popular uprising against the Palestinian Authority," the statement said.

The Palestinian militant group, which claimed responsibility for a wave of deadly suicide bombings in the Jewish state earlier this year, rejected 'Arafat's charges that it was behind the unrest.

It also reiterated its call for the release of its members held in Palestinian jails.

'Arafat ordered the arrest of hundreds of Hamas members under pressure from Israel after the spate of suicide bombings.

The Israeli army also sealed off the Palestinian self-rule areas after the attacks in February and March.

The deaths of the two men sparked bloody riots and demonstrations in the two West Bank towns, and 'Arafat ordered a quick trial of the three policemen accused of torturing the prisoner who died. They were sentenced to lengthy prison terms with hard labor on Saturday by the Palestinian supreme security court in Jericho.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Sees Recent Events as 'Intifadah Against the PA'

TA0308160096 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 1415 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas], issued a statement today indicating that the Tulkarm and Nabulus incidents are the beginning of a new popular intifadah against the PA [Palestinian Authority]. Following are excerpts of the statement:

While the Zionist cabinet was declaring a number of procedures to encourage settlement activities and stealing more Palestinian land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, hundreds of 'Arafat's militia were shooting at our Palestinian people who are families and friends of detainees in 'Arafat's authority prisons. This is after they gathered to protest the inhumane conditions that their sons live in inside the Palestinian prisons and the savage torture they are subjected to due to their political viewpoints.

The new massacre by the Authority gangs resulted in the martyrdom of brother Ibrahim Hadaydah and the injury of tens of his brothers by PA police bullets. This is after it was clear from the beginning that the it was a peaceful demonstration which the police intended to dismantle by force.

What happened in Tulkarm is merely a natural extension of the self-autonomy authority practices since its entry to the Gaza Strip two years ago. The incident is a loud violation of our people's rights and freedoms. What we've witnessed at the gates of Tulkarm Prison yesterday was a react of the Palestine massacre crime in Gaza, to the attack on al-Najah University in Nabulus and to the killing of Mahmud Jumayyil of savage torture by the authority security apparatuses. This is in addition to the tens of other attacks executed by the authority gangs against our people and its national institutions.

Your movement, Hamas, which rejected to be dragged into an internal conflict that will end the Palestinian people's unity — practices by the authority — sees in Tulkarm and Nabulus incidents the beginning of a popular intifadah against an authority that has sold itself to the occupier.

'Arafat's authority intended to deprive the freedoms and suffocate the people's aspirations through assassinations, imprisonment campaigns, and chasing the opinion of the other. This is in an attempt to pass through weak agreements that the Zionists continue to violate each day while the crippled and defeated authority speaks of the implementation of its commitments.

We reject the lies of the self-autonomy authority on the participation of armed Hamas members, who were shooting sporadically at the people, in the Tulkarm events.

We, in Hamas movement, believe in the right of the people to resist its lashers and to break the chains that the Zionists and their collaborators attempt to shackle them under national slogans and the building of an independent state.

We, in Hamas movement, reject all of the investigation committees plays, which reminds our people of the fake investigation committees that were formed by the Zionists after every crime or massacre they had committed against our people.

We, in Hamas movement, insist on the immediate and unconditional release of all political detainees in 'Arafat's prisons. We also demand the dismantling of all intelligence apparatuses who failed to maintain the security of the people and occupied itself in hunting its mujahideen.

We, in Hamas movement, call upon our people to confront all the oppressive measures of the authority and its attempt to militarize the society. We ask our mujahideen in 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, their brothers in Fatah Hawks and the other occupation resistance military apparatuses to strike Zionist targets in response to 'Arafat's authority crimes and their oppressive militias.

[Signed] Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas — Jerusalem Saturday, 3 August 1996

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat, Hamas Source Comment on Incidents

TA0408103996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, official in charge of local government in the Palestinian Authority [PA], has stated that the Israeli decision to unfreeze on settlement activity not only contravenes the Oslo Accords, but also deals a fatal blow to the peace process. In an interview with our correspondent Yasir 'Atilah, Dr. 'Urayqat described what happened in Nabulus as a grave mistake. Referring to the trial of those involved in the murder of Mahmud al-Jumayyil, he added: It is natural for the town's inhabitants to demonstrate because this reflects democracy, whose pillars we are trying to consolidate, but there is an immense difference between the demonstrators and the expression of views in Nabulus and the riots that took place in Tulkarm in which the citizens broke the law and stormed PA institutions and centers. This is something grave and impermissible. We must wait until the ministerial fact-finding committee formed by the PA chairman concludes its work.

In another development, a responsible Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] source, who preferred to remain anonymous, told our correspondent that the number of incidents in West Bank towns have caused great discontent and indignation among Palestinians against the PA and its organs. Therefore, the PA should draw up a system and a law for the security organs. If the PA does not realize this and does not draw up a system that governs everyone, the results will be negative.

Palestinian Affairs: Intelligence Chief — Hamas Command 'Abroad' Ordered Riots

JN0408113596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Amin al-Hindi, director general of the General Intelligence Department, said that documents and messages exchanged between the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] commands at home and abroad show that the command abroad has called for riots and provocations against the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] and its achievements. Al-Hindi regretted individual excesses by some malicious elements. He called on the Palestinian opposition to stand by the PNA at this critical stage of building and reconstruction. These remarks were made during a news conference by the director general of the General Intelligence Department in Gaza at noon today.

Palestinian Affairs: Authority "Sources' React to Hamas Call for Uprising

JN0408122696 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Aug 96

[Report by Basim Abu-Sumayyah in "the Palestinian territories"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian National Authority [PNA] has not responded to a Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] statement that calls for a popular uprising against the PNA. However, PNA sources said the timing of the statement emphasizes the existence of a plan by the Hamas leadership abroad to undermine the PNA and strike at its accomplishments.

In another development, efforts continue to calm the situation in Tulkarm and Nabulus following the recent incidents in which a Palestinian died under interrogation at a detention center in Nabulus. The Palestinian State Security Court yesterday sentenced three Palestinian officers to 10-15 years and expelled them from service for causing the death of Mahmud al-Jumayyil under torture in a Nabulus prison. Intensive efforts were made yesterday to calm the situation in Tulkarm and Nabulus and restore calm and stability. Normal life has returned to the two cities, but worry over the possible deterioration of the situation continues to reign high because certain parties may fabricate problems that will lead to domestic strife.

Palestinian Affairs: Ahmad Quray' on Nabulus Events, Settlements, U.S. Stance

NC0508085596 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 5 Aug 96

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, in Jerusalem, by Sayyid al-Miliji, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given— recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Al-Miliji] Welcome, Mr. Ahmad. Could we learn more details about the events that took place in Nabulus and Tulkarm recently, and the measures the Palestinian Authority [PA] took to confront these events?

[Quray'] To be honest with you, what happened in Nabulus was wrong, an unacceptable and unjustified violation by some Palestinian security forces. It was a real shock to the Palestinian citizen, whether official, deputy, or representative. This is not what we are dreaming of or aspiring for. This is also not what our people want. The fact that torture takes place to an extent, where one of the accused brothers is martyred, irrespective of his crime, as a result of an error in torture or ignorance of how to practice it, or even absence of knowledge or awareness regarding this responsibility, is not acceptable. Praise be to God, Brother Abu- 'Ammar immediately referred those who committed the crime to a field court. The field court made its decisions, which were firm and strict and received with great relief on the street. These decisions restored the PA's prestige and the confidence of the masses in it. With regard to Tulkarm, I consider events there to be an attempt at expanding the Nabulus events. The crisis was contained and overpowered completely. Everyone knows now that confronting this crisis must take place with great responsibility and awareness, and everybody should be united like one man, so that no opportunity is left open to those who want to fish in muddy waters and those who do not want the PA to succeed. We should not give these people any chance. The general trend all sides agreed on during a series of continuing meetings of the Palestinian leadership, the PLO, the Council of Ministers, and the Legislative Council, was that there is a need to safeguard and maintain the dignity of the citizen and that of the authority. These two factors must be present at all times. One of them should not take place at the expense of the other. [passage omitted]

[Al-Miliji] Let us move on to discuss the Israeli Government's decision to lift restrictions imposed on settlements in the occupied territories, which is really the talk of the hour. With regard to the Palestinian authority, what are the measures you took or are planning to take to counter the Israeli decision?

[Quray'] Through the Voice of the Arabs - the voice of all the Arabs - I confirm, declare, and publicize clearly and honestly that this matter should unite us. This issue is what we - Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims - should meet over. This is the hottest issue at the moment. Now, the Israeli Government has once again started making blood flow and giving life, vitality, and movement to the settlement activities. If settlement activities are resumed, I would say very frankly that there is no use whatsoever for negotiations or talks. At that point, we should end negotiations and talks, because with these moves, Israel wants to create an umbrella for its settlement policy by saying that there is peace with the Palestinians or that there is peace with the Arabs. All our Arab brothers and our people must understand that this settlement danger cannot be accepted. The peace process can never proceed forward, because there is no use for a peace that victimizes the Arabs, or that forfeits one inch of land.

What the Israeli Government announced is a big and serious danger and what it announced regarding Jerusalem is also a very big and serious danger. The objective of settlements around Jerusalem is to engulf the whole of [words indistinct] the West Bank to what is called Greater Jerusalem, and change it into settlements. This is the issue we should be uniting over now and dedicating all our efforts to. We also need to bolster national, Arab, and Islamic unity so that this danger can be confronted.

[Al-Miliji] The Israeli Government's decision has been condemned by various sides, foremost of which is the Arab League. There is also a well-known U.S. Administration stance on settlements, which is that they violate the peace process that began in Madrid. Considering all these condemnations that have been issued, particularly the condemnation by Egypt, what in your opinion will be the appropriate measure for deterring the Israeli Government or making it go back on its decision?

[Quray'] A highly coordinated Arab stance should be taken on this matter. Condemnation is not enough, much as I am grateful for it. The Arab stand must publicly declare to the Israeli Government that there can be no peace or normalization if there is settlement activities, or if there are violations with regard to Jerusalem. These are issues relating to the final status negotiations. They should stay as they are until their fate is determined in the final status negotiations. The U.S. stance is not enough. The United States is the sponsor of the peace process and should declare a clear stand, as it affirmed in the letter of assurances that was given to the Palestinians before the Madrid conference started, and as it confirmed in the letter on loans for Israel. The U.S. Government should declare a clear and frank stand on all these matters. As far as we, the Palestinians, are concerned, I believe that if settlement activities are resumed or continued, things will get out of hand, and we will have no choice but confrontation. If confrontation does take place, it will be bitter and harsh. Therefore, we strongly warn against the dangers of confrontation.

[Al-Miliji] Dear listeners, we thank you and thank our interviewee, Mr. Ahmad Quray', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, who was with us, here in Cairo, on the phone from Jerusalem. Thank you.

[Quray'] You are welcome.

Palestinian Affairs: Commentary Denounces Tulkarm Riots

JN0208204196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1710 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Station commentary by Radwan Abu-'Ayyash, chairman of the Palestine Broadcasting Corporation]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Fain would they extinguish God's light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that his light should be perfected, even though the unbelievers may detest it. [Koranic verse]

Sons of our noble Palestinian Arab people; the people who stood fast in Beirut and in al-Karamah [battle]; grandchildren of the righteous mujahidin; people of the intifadah in Jabaliya in Gaza, Balatah in Nabulus, in heroic Nur-al-Shams, and in the beloved Palestinian villages and proud towns of Gaza, Nabulus, Hebron, Janin, Rafah, Ramallah and al-Birah, and brave Tulkarm; people in every town, village, and on every inch of Palestine's soil who were liberated from the sordid cells by the blood of the martyrs and the faithful mujahidin who are working in every position of the revolution and in every arena of sacrifice:

We greet you with all the values upheld by the noble ones. We extend to you a Jerusalem greeting from the courtyards of al-Aqsa Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Greetings from every heart that beats with love for this homeland, Palestine.

Sisters and brothers: Our cubs have raised the flag of Palestine on top of buildings, in squares, in streets, and everywhere. They raised it in their hearts, some of which are bleeding while others are still beating with pride and dignity. Who are they? They are your children, the heroes struggling for Palestine. Now that there is room for freedom on the way to total liberation, and following the failure of those wagering on the civil war, the failure of all those who thought themselves capable of wreaking havoc, and now that the meadows of the homeland began to blossom with responsible freedom, every now and then a group of those who have gone astray appears on the scene. The aim of such a group is to destroy and not to hold a dialogue. Its aim is to lie in wait for mistakes instead of supporting the Authority of the people and the people of the Authority.

The Authority is not a group of prophets. Its members do the right thing through interpretation and sometimes commit mistakes. Although the Authority is being provoked, however, your children should never be provoked. The instructions of father President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] have always been to reunite the people, maintain dialogue, remain calm, and heal the wounds.

Why are those people not provoked by settlements? Why are they not provoked by the Israeli arrests and the detainees' conditions? Why don't they forge the constitution of the homeland and the laws of survival? Why do they not join forces with the workers going toward the sun? Why do they not plant crops and raise cattle? And why don't they offer better arguments?

This is a big question which we raise objectively. Who benefits from breaking the law? Who benefits from tampering with the blood of the martyrs and from destroying the prestige of the Palestinian National Authority? Why do they reject all kinds of dialogue, discussions, or the genuine calls for the sake of God, the homeland, and the true Islamic religion?

Let us agree on common terms, offer sacrifice and good work, and support the sacred national unity. Should we revolve in fabricated conflicts? What about Jerusalem, what about the female and male prisoners, what about Hebron, what about the territories still under occupation, what about the hunger of the workers, and what about the Authority that builds day and night for the sake of the Palestinian people?

Our people in Tulkarm and Nabulus, our Palestinian people everywhere: Have you forgotten the occupation's bullets penetrating the chests of our sons? Have you forgotten the settlers spreading corruption? Has the Palestinian Authority come from the moon or from our righteous people? Are they not our sons, are they not our kinfolk, and are they not from us? Did we all not raise the slogan of the PLO, our sole legitimate representative?

Did we not protect ourselves from bloodshed, suffering, and hunger and did we not pay blood, suffering, and hunger as a price for that slogan? For whom did Abu-Iyad [Salah Khalaf], Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], and Abu-Hasan Salamah fall? For whom did convoys of martyrs in our villages, camps, and cities fall? Did they do all this for a group which is still insisting on sedition? For whom is the killing, against whom are arms used, and what is the justification?

Palestinians everywhere in this homeland and the Diaspora: How can we forget the suffering and destroy with our own hands the first breeze of freedom? The homeland is like a child. It needs construction, protection, care, and security. In construction, individual mistakes will certainly occur here and there. Why do they exploit mistakes and set the fires of destruction?.

We will not raise the issue of agreements made in the darkness of night between the enemies of our people. We tell every Palestinian man and woman to protect their country. Let us protect our country, Palestine. Let us protect our achievements, and let us protect our Authority. We will not allow tamperers to do what they want. Long live Palestine free and proud for its loyal, righteous people; long live the loyal Authority of the people; long live the symbol of its struggle father leader Abu-'Ammar; long live the struggle of our brave heroes, the female and male prisoners in the occupation jails; and long live our people, each in his position. Glory and eternity for our righteous martyrs. The revolution of construction and work will continue until victory, God willing. God supports us, supports right, and is with the strugglers, who continue the march even if the infidels hate it.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Europe Seen as Way Forward in Peace Process

MS0208121196 London THE GUARDIAN in English 2 Aug 96 p 11

[Article by David Hirst: "Arabs Look to Europe to Break Peace Impasse"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Two weeks ago, Germany brokered a deal under which Hizbullah exchanged the bodies of two Israeli soldiers killed in Lebanon for those of 123 of its fighters. It was a minor affair, marking no real improvement in relations between all the parties involved — Iran, Syria, Israel, Lebanon and Hizbullah. But the Germans saw it as a breakthrough, and spoke of "the desire in the region" for them "to get involved more heavily in political negotiations, and for the European Union as a whole to do the same".

It was part of a trend which had found much more significant expression two months earlier. When Israel launched its Grapes of Wrath assault on Lebanon, France launched its boldest piece of Middle East diplomacy in years. The foreign minister, Herve de Charette went to the region and competed with his American counterpart, Warren Christopher, in negotiating a truce.

This encroachment on a traditional United States preserve annoyed not just Israel and the US, but even some of France's European partners, especially Britain. But Mr De Charette — who was in Algeria yesterday meeting President Lamine Zeroual — was unrepentant. Back in Beirut last month he said that France was now a "major actor" in the Middle East and would be launching new attempts to invigorate the "peace process".

The "peace process" is of course the core issue on which any distinctive European policy for the Middle East would necessarily focus. For too long Europe has basically left it to the U.S. to shape the West's higher strategies in the region. The Arabs, essentially out of abject weakness, have connived in this, thinking that the more they flattered the U.S., the more of an "honest broker" it was likely to be.

But its effect has been the opposite — merely hastening the relentless "Zionisation" of American politics. The U.S. has become more partisan than ever, secure in the knowledge that weak Arab governments will never penalise it, President Clinton, the culmination of this trend, barely has a Middle East policy at all, other than swallowing what Israel wants. He is a totally dishonest broker.

America's response to two recent events — Grapes of Wrath and the electoral victory of Binyamin Netanyahu — swept away the last Arab doubts about that.

Definitions of terrorism and how to combat it are now a key yardstick of partisanship in the Middle East. Yet in flagrant contrast to the United Nations, Amnesty International, and just about everyone except the Israelis themselves, the U.S. found nothing wrong with the deliberate shelling of a UN base at Qana and the villagers sheltering there, still less could it see any moral equivalence with the "terror" coming from the other side.

However disappointed it was at the defeat of Shim'on Peres, champion of Pax Americana, the Clinton administration has been busy acclimatising itself to the new Israel prime minister ever since. It blithely ignores the fact that just about all he says and does — from his rejection of "land-for-peace" to his appointment of the appalling Ariel Sharon —is almost as much an affront to the U.S. and its (former) understanding of that peace process as it is to the Arabs. Washington greets Mr Netanyahu like a conquering hero even as its former hero, Mr Peres, joins the Arabs in prophesying the disasters Mr Netanyahu will cause.

It is mere logic that, in their weakness, the Arabs should at last begin to look seriously to Europe as a counterweight to the U.S. Elementary self-respect and self-interest command that Europe should respond.

It is demeaning for Europe, with its weight in world affairs, its geographic proximity to and historical association with the Arabs, to accept the virtual U.S. monopoly of Middle East policy-making, the more obvious it becomes that U.S. policy will lead to the destruction of the peace process.

For Israel and the U.S., the "war on terror" is but a way of transferring the Arab-Israeli struggle from the moral and political grounds on which it properly belongs to security ones which are merely derivative of it. And it is absurd to fight Arab or Muslim terror without any acknowledgement that there is an Israeli terror too.

It becomes a matter of obvious self-interest when, on Israel's behalf, the U.S. expects the Europeans to go along with sanctions, damaging to, commerce, in the service of a political agenda on which they disagree anyway.

Europe balked at doing that in Paris this week. But it is not enough. With Mr Clinton's acquiescence in the aggressive, expansionist Zionism Mr Netanyahu embodies Europe needs to develop Middle East policy which systematically challenges that of the U.S. on the moral and political fundamentals.

Unlike the U.S., the EU did condemn the Qana massacre. And in a formal statement it echoed the demand of the recent Arab summit that, for the peace process to continue, Israeli must return to the key principles — "land for peace" and self-determination for the Palestinians — which Mr Netanyahu has repudiated.

But the evolution of a common European policy is a halting process. It is clearly not one that Britain with its transatlantic affinities, is going to lead, nor can Germany, with its guilty past. France is the obvious candidate.

Algeria

Algeria: Zeroual Condemns Murder of Oran Bishop

LD0208160596 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Algerian Government has strongly condemned the criminal attack on the Bishop Pierre Claveries of the town of Oran, who died following the explosion of a bomb at his residence.

President Liamine Zeroual today sent a message of condolence to Father Teissier, the archbishop of Algiers.

The message read, in particular: I heard with indignation the news of the cowardly assassination of Bishop of Oran Pierre Claveries; I strongly condemn such a hideous act. I feel for your bereavement over this big loss, and I would like to present to you and to your co-religionists my sincerest condolences.

The president of the republic added, however, that such a criminal act was against humanitarian values, concord, and hospitality, which are characteristics of the true Muslim religion and the personality of the Algerian people.

Algeria: Foreign Ministry Condemns Oran Bishop's Murder

LD0208123396 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] We begin our newscast by reporting that a telephone conversation took place today between Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf and French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette.

We have just received a statement from the Foreign Ministry which says that, during the conversation, Ahmed Attaf reiterated to his French counterpart, the Algerian Government's strong condemnation of this hideous crime against a loved and a respected clergyman, and conveyed to him the Algerian Government's condolences and sympathy to the French Government and people.

Algeria: Islamic Groups Believed Responsible For Bishop's Murder

LD0208130496 Paris Radio France International in French 1200 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Algeria the bishop of Oran has been murdered. Msgr. Pierre Claverie was killed last night when a remote-controlled bomb exploded as his car was entering the bishopric. His driver also died in the attack. What do we know about the circumstances of this tragedy, which is a blow to the Catholic Church in Algeria? Laurent Chaffard reports:

[Chaffard] Msgr. Claverie was murdered as he was returning from Algiers where he met with the French foreign minister. A bomb planted in the yard of his bishopric in Oran exploded when it was activated as his car drove by. He died instantly, and so did his driver.

According to initial findings, the explosive charge was linked to a gas canister, and a remote control was used to explode it. This technique is generally used by Islamist groups, and therefore they are believed to have carried out the murder. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Exiled Islamic Leader Condemns Bishop's Slaying

BR0208114396 Paris AFP in French 0741 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 2 Aug (AFP) — The assassination of Monsignor Pierre Claverie, bishop of Oran (western Algeria), on Thursday evening [1 August], is a "sadistic and immoral act," Anouar Haddam, an Algerian Islamic fundamentalist leader living abroad, stated on Friday.

In a communique issued on behalf of the parliamentary delegation of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] (dissolved FIS) and received in Paris, Mr. Haddam sees this crime as carrying "the signature of the same sadistic culture which characterizes the officials and maneuvers of the regime of terror which is in power."

"The FIS hopes that this tragic and painful event will not be taken advantage of by people who are pushing France to give increasing political and financial support to the terrorist regime which is in place in Algiers, involving France in this way in a war in which it ought not be to involved," the text, which is signed by Mr. Haddam who lives in the United States, indicates.

Mr. Haddam, who appears to be isolated abroad, states that he is speaking on behalf of the FIS, whose leaders are in prison in Algeria. However, a rival structure, the FIS executive office abroad, which is led by Rabah Kebir in Bonn, denies that Mr. Haddam in any way represents the FIS.

Algeria: Explosion in Tiaret Reportedly Injures 'Scores' of People

LD0508111596 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Algeria — Press reports today said that scores of people were injured in a booby-trapped truck explosion last night in the city of Tiaret, southwest of the capital Algiers.

The Algerian newspaper EL KHABAR said that the explosion took place in the center of the city and the majority of the injured were passersby. The explosion also caused considerable material damage, it added.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak on U.S. Trip, Arab Solidarity, Peace Process

*NC0208132096 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0852 GMT 2 Aug 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 2 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has described his latest visit to Washington as one of his most successful visits to the United States.

He emphasized that Egyptian-U.S. ties are strong and based on frankness, understanding, and continuous contacts. During these contacts, he added, everything concerning political and economic issues, regional cooperation, and other issues of interest to both sides, are discussed.

President Mubarak referred to his strong ties of friendship with all U.S. Congress leaders, ties he described as excellent and based on frankness and clarity which allows problems to be discussed in a straight forward way.

Speaking on today's "Good Morning Egypt" Program, broadcast by the Egyptian television's First Channel, President Mubarak expressed his belief that his visit to the United States this time will generate numerous U.S. investments in Egypt.

President Mubarak said his visit to the United States this time involved meetings between the Egyptian and U.S. Businessmen's Councils and their presidents, in the presence of U.S. Vice President Al Gore. He added that the two sides engaged in frank conversation on investment and economic reform in Egypt, which recently made a great leap in removing numerous impediments, something that left foreign investors with good impression.

He noted that Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri's government has embarked on eliminating other obstacles, so that investors can sense the stability enjoyed by Egypt.

He said Albert Gore was a supporter of these developments in Egypt and that he worked to urge U.S. investors to invest in Egypt. President Mubarak noted that studies are currently under way to enable these investors to make investments in the al-Suways and Port Said governorates.

He emphasized that stability and security are the most important factors that encourage foreigners to invest in Egypt and noted that the climate of investment in Egypt can accommodate any investor, be he a foreigner or Egyptian.

Asked about his discussions with U.S. President Bill Clinton on terrorism, President Mubarak said he discussed this issue not only with President Clinton but also with the Congressmen and all the officials whom he met there.

President Mubarak warned again of the danger of this phenomenon and stressed the need to examine its motives and resisting it, as well as the need for world countries to agree on how to resist and remove the causes of terrorist operations.

He referred to his proposal at the news conference he held at the White House on the need to form a committee to discuss terrorism and its causes and to compile recommendations to an international summit capable of defining ways to handle this international phenomenon.

He said the Palestinian issue in the Middle East is the main issue that triggers terrorism. The people, he added, feel there is no justice and this generates more acts of violence. He emphasized the need to pursue the peace process so that terrorist operations can be averted.

President Mubarak pointed out that he discussed this issue at his recent meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, who promised he will honor all the signed treaties and documents and will begin to implement them in a different manner.

The president said: What matters to us in this respect is the implementation of these commitments so that we may avoid future complications and encourage other parties, such as Syria and Lebanon, to enter the peace process to reach a final solution.

President Mubarak reiterated the need for progress in the peace process on the Palestinian track before the economic conference, due to be held in Cairo in November, so that the parties concerned can be encouraged. He expressed his belief that the Israeli prime minister is fully aware of this issue.

On his discussions with President Clinton on the outcome of the recent Cairo Arab summit, President Mubarak said he briefed the U.S. President after that summit. He added that the summit's final communique was very good and that the Arabs were for the first time able to talk unanimously about a peace strategy.

He said he is used to discussing everything concerning the Arab countries during his meetings in the United States or in any European country. He added that he discussed the peace process at length, expressing the interest of all the Arab countries in it.

He noted that he will meet Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat soon and that he might send messages to the leaders of some Arab countries and visit other countries. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Mubarak To Send Messages to Arab leaders on U.S. Talks

NC0308150996 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1425 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak will send messages to Arab leaders briefing them on the outcome of the talks he held in the United States.

In a statement today, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said the messages are part of measures to inform the Arab leaders of any developments affecting the peace process or activating the process on various tracks.

He added that Egypt will hold further contacts with Israel, especially with regard to the Israeli cabinet's decision to revoke the previous government's decision freezing settlement activities.

He emphasized that the settlement process has an adverse effect on the peace process and warned of a potential danger to the peace process if the settlement issue is activated the way it was announced.

Commenting on a draft resolution to be discussed by the Security Council to increase sanctions against Sudan, Musa noted that this matter is up to the Council and is subject to a timetable defined by resolutions passed in this respect.

He added that the Security Council is following a timetable for carrying out these resolutions. He said the ultimatum contained in the last resolution, No. 1054, concerning diplomatic sanctions against Sudan expired at the end of July and that the council has to discuss the issue again.

He said increasing sanctions against Sudan is not the concern of just one member of the Security Council, but that the Council follows up on the implementation of its resolutions.

Egypt: Mubarak's Remarks at Cabinet Meeting Cited

NC0308135596 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1205 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has said the Council of Ministers' one-and-a-half hour meeting this morning, chaired by President Husni Mubarak, reviewed the results of the president's visit to the United States. It also reviewed the issues President Mubarak discussed with the U.S. Administration and decision-making circles during his meetings there.

Al-Sharif said President Mubarak described these meetings as extremely important in explaining the Arabs' views and emphasizing the Arab nation's principles, values, and practical views of the future in order to bring about a just and comprehensive peace that will bring security and stability to all Middle Eastern countries.

Al-Sharif added that President Mubarak expressed appreciation for the understanding shown by U.S. President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, and U.S. Administration officials regarding the Arab situation and the clear picture of peace conveyed by President Mubarak. This is in addition to the Arabs' view of the future of the peace process based on adherence to the points of reference of that process. All institutions of the international community, as well as the sponsoring states led by the United States, contributed to formulating these points of reference and working to achieve them in practice, he noted.

The Egyptian information minister said President Mubarak pointed out that a spirit of friendship, mutual respect, and appreciation of Egypt's role in completing the peace process prevailed during the talks. This is in addition to Egypt's clear desire to support the parties to that process, seeing it as an important and vital matter. The talks revealed that no change has been introduced to the U.S. stand and the principles that govern the peace process. [passage omitted]

President Mubarak said his meetings with the committee chairmen and members of both houses of Congress complemented the important talks he held in Washington to explain the facts. He emphasized that these talks corrected many misconceptions about a number of issues, so they can have a clear picture without confusion.

President Mubarak said he emphasized during his meetings in Washington that the Arab summit was an Arab initiative and an affair of the whole Arab world family to deal with their own issues and express their will. He also emphasized that the Arab summit passed resolutions and recommendations showing the Arabs' maturity in understanding world and regional issues. These resolutions and recommendations, he added, also emphasized for the first time since the Arab League was founded that peace was a strategic option They also asserted the principle of land for peace in the context of the Madrid and Oslo resolutions and all Security Council and UN resolutions. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif went on to say that President Mubarak dealt with a number of issues that had been discussed during his talks and meetings in Washington, including the Libyan-Western dispute, which was discussed within the context of the Arab summit resolutions and the efforts to reach a solution, the international stand on Sudan, and the alleviation of the Iraqi people's suffering. In this respect, the president referred to the proposal he made in Washington that the international community look for ways to deter and punish violators of international norms and rules as an alternative to sanctions and boycotts, which represent a collective punishment from whose consequences and burdens the peoples suffer while the perpetrators of crimes remain free. He also referred to the discussions about confronting terrorism now that it has become an international phenomenon and reiterated the call he made several years ago for forming an international committee to discuss the reasons that have led to the spread of this phenomenon, tackle the major issues at their roots, and lay down rules that would obligate the involved countries to stop sheltering, training, and financing terrorists regardless of their nationality or religion.

Touching on Egyptian-U.S. relations, President Mubarak stressed that nothing is marring these ties and there is a common understanding of the two countries' interests. He also stressed that differences of views on issues is normal between friendly countries and that these are discussed through channels of dialogue and have no bearing on the ties, relations, and interests that bind the two countries. He said that his visit reflected the essence of the unique relations between the two countries and emphasized the countries' bilateral cooperation. He added that his talks with the U.S. president, senior officials, and the decision-making centers showed that the economic relations between the two countries are moving on the right track and that there is a commitment to give all the help needed to bolster Egypt's economy. He said that the U.S. side expressed confidence in the Egyptian economy and its performance and praised the measures taken by Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri's government to reform the economy. He noted that these measures were well received in all the meetings held in Washington.

The president went on to say that the economic delegation that accompanied him completed the talks that were started in Cairo with the IMF, and the two sides have reached a final agreement that will be submitted to the IMF board at its next meeting. He said that this testifies to Egypt's success in implementing its economic reform program on all tracks. He added: We agree only with what is in line with our short-, medium-, and long-term interests. Any agreement we conclude will not add any burden for the Egyptian citizen or lead to any increase in the prices of services or basic commodities. [passage omitted]

The information minister added that President Mubarak issued several instructions related to diplomatic actions in the coming stage, the framework of this action at the international and regional levels, and contacts at the Arab level to coordinate the stands, brief the Arab leaders on the results of the Washington visit, exchange views, and learn these leaders' views. He added that President Mubarak noted in this respect that he will meet with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and a number of other leaders during the coming few days and that he will also send messages to a number of Arab leaders and will contact Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to give momentum to the peace process. He added that the president also asked the government to prepare working papers on his proposal to find alternatives to collective punishments from which peoples suffer; these should be within the context of the UN Charter. He instructed them to form a working group to prepare working papers on confronting terrorism at the international level. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Feelers Sent Out For 'Limited Summit' on Peace Process

MM0208132896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Aug 96 p 6

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahman Muhammad: "Cairo Calls for Convening Mini Arab Summit This Month"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — Egyptian diplomatic sources have revealed that Cairo has begun extensive contacts with some Arab capitals to hold a limited summit to discuss the requirements of the peace process in the Middle East and the Arab position in the wake of the visits witnessed by the region and President Husni Mubarak's visit to Washington, during which U.S. and Israeli orientations and policies vis-a-vis the peace process were defined.

The sources said that the summit's date and venue will be determined via diplomatic channels. The sources expect the summit to include the states concerned with the peace process (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine." However, the sources did not rule out the participation of other Arab states, especially from the Gulf Cooperation Council. The sources pointed out that the summit will focus on formulating unified Arab strategic mechanisms in the light of latest developments in the region and the resolutions adopted by the recent Arab summit, in order to enable the states concerned with the negotiations with Israel to stand fast on the Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian tracks, especially with regard to the final phase negotiations on the Palestinian track, which have been frozen since the early rounds in March.

Egypt: Perpetrators of Egyptian Embassy Blast in Pakistan Arrested

NC0208141696 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 29 Jul 96 p 1

[Hamadah Imam report: "Information from a Woman Exposed the Perpetrators of the Pakistan Operation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Finally and amid complete secrecy, the Egyptian security services have arrested two of the perpetrators of the explosion at the Egyptian Embassy in Pakistan last November in which 15 persons were killed and 159 injured.

The operation began with information received from a woman who said that terrorist (M), who was arrested in the past for his involvement in the assassination of [former Egyptian President Anwar] al-Sadat, had returned to the country to attempt to revive the al-Jihad Organization. He succeeded in recruiting 59 young people, formed a shura council, and turned one of the 'Ayn Shams mosques into a center for propagating the ideas of Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman.

The security services' next step was to send a 12-member security delegation to Pakistan to check that this leader had in fact visited Islamabad and the dates of his entry and exit before and after the blast. As AL-'ARABI learned from a security source, when the information was confirmed, terrorist (M) and his aide (A), leader of the military wing, were among 64 defendants arrested on charges of trying to revive the al-Jihad Organization and embarking on new terrorist operations.

Sudan

Sudan: Islamic People's Congress Asks Somali Leaders To Negotiate

EA0408204996 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1725 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 4 Aug (SUNA) — The Islamic People's Congress has mourned the death of General Muhammad Farah Aidid. A statement issued in Khartoum issued today said that Aidid, who led the Somali revolution against dictator Muhammad Siad Barre's regime, performed a major role in (?saving) Somalia by single-handedly throwing out the American forces and preventing foreign forces from landing on and taking control of Somali territory on behalf of the UN. The congress expressed regret that Aidid and other fraternal leaders had to depart while fighting continued between people of the same blood from among the Muslim Somali people.

The statement said: We want them to have long lives to enable them to build their homeland. The congress called on the Somali faction leaders, particularly Ali Mahdi Muhammad, Isa Siad and Uthman Ato, and the leaders of the other factions to sit down together to stop the war and save the lives of the leaders and rescue the Somali people who have for so long suffered at the hands of ferocious foreign invaders and from atrocious tribal fighting.

The conference welcomed the cease-fire initiative and [words indistinct] expressing support for uniting the Somali people under the banner of Islam.

Sudan: Minister Says UN Security Council Proposes Ban on Sudan Airways

EA0408173096 Omdurman Sudan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In a television interview today, Dr. Mustafa Uthman Isma'il, the minister of state at the Ministry of External Relations, spoke about the latest developments in the corridors of the UN Security Council concerning Sudan.

The minister said that Botswana had put forward a draft resolution to the UN Security Council proposing a ban on Sudan Airways and all aviation companies registered in Sudan. He said Egypt vigorously supported the resolution. The minister of state for external relations said Egypt had called for the formation of a permanent committee to follow up sanctions imposed by the Security Council on Sudan. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Political Peace Charter Signatory Arrives For Talks

EA0508123296 Khartoum SUNA in French 0915 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Khartoum, 5 Aug (SUNA) — Mr. Arok Thuon Arok, one of the signatories of the recent political peace charter, arrived here yesterday from Nairobi, Kenya, where he currently lives, for talks with Sudanese officials on the general programs, and the peace agenda. [passage omitted]

It should be recalled that Mr. Arok, who is considered one of the fiercest opponents of John Garang, escaped an attempt last month by [words indistinct] movement.

Bahrain

Bahrain: Opposition Calls For 'Week of Peaceful Resistance'

JN0408123496 (Internet) Voice of Bahrain WWW in English 3 Aug 96

[Voice of Bahrain is a London-based Bahraini opposition source]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The opposition has called for a week of peaceful civil resistance starting on 9th August and lasting until the 16th of August to protest against the vicious policies of the ruling family.

The 40th day anniversary of the martyr 'Ali Tahir, 17 years, will be commemorated on 11th August. On the other hand, the 15th of August will mark the 25th anniversary of the British decision to withdraw from Bahrain. Twenty five years of independence have been dominated by one prime minister adopting the same out-dated mentality that resulted in the dissolution of the National Assembly in August 1975 and created instability and loss of national pride.

The opposition has called on the people of Bahrain to withhold from paying utilities and services bills in the period between 9 and 16 August and to reduce shopping activities to necessities. Furthermore, the opposition has called for the switching-off of utilities (electricity, water, and telephone) for fifteen minutes on Friday 16 August, starting at 12.00 pm (mid-day). The latter is in solidarity with the prisoners of conscience being tortured and held as hostages.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Kuwaiti-U.S. Exercises 'Clear Signal' To Iraqi Regime

LD0208212496 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwaiti F-18 aircraft and U.S. aircraft of various types, including B-52s, this afternoon took part in bombing operations in Udayri' region as a part of the Stormy Sea [al-bahr al-'asif] exercises. Our colleague Muhammad al-Khashman has sent us this report from the location.

[Khashman] On the painful anniversary of the treacherous Iraqi aggression against Kuwait and six years later, a number of alliance B-52 aircraft of the U.S. Air Force and Kuwaiti Air Force F-18 aircraft carried out bombing operations on some targets in Udayri' region as a clear signal, meant for the ruling Iraqi regime, to demonstrate the presence of the alliance forces and their capability to retaliate against any barbaric attack or move by that regime. [passage omitted]

The U.S. marine commander assigned to the U.S. Central Command, Commander, Rick Roghman, was asked about the aim of the exercise. He replied that the aircraft were engaged in a part of larger exercises codenamed the "Stormy Sea" which involved training in rapid deployment in a short time. The exercises began about four weeks earlier and were aimed at demonstrating the forces' capability in rapid deployment in the region against any attack on friendly countries.

Kuwait: Prime Minister on Relations With Saudi Arabia, Bahrain

LD0408201396 Riyadh SPA in English 1918 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kuwait, Aug 4, SPA — Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah has described as 'strong and firm,' his country's relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In an interview with Kuwaiti newspaper AL-WATAN, circulated today by the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA), he reaffirmed Kuwait's full support to Bahrain in facing any outside threats to its security and internal stability.

He disclosed that the Iraqi regime is still posing threats to Kuwait and the region.

Kuwait: National Assembly Discusses Decline in Morality

LD0308190496 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The National Assembly held an extraordinary session at 1300 today. The session was chaired by Speaker Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Sa'dun and then his deputy Salih Yusuf al-Fadalah.

After approving the minutes of the previous session, the assembly ratified Report 31 of the Education Affairs and Guidance Committee, regarding a request made by some members to discuss the emergence of some signs that suggest a decline in morality and behavior in society. These signs — such as murders, the possession of weapons among the young, attacks, and drug trafficking — have prompted fears that such a phenomenon may spread and get worse.

One member of parliament put forward a proposal for setting up of a committee chaired by the minister of religious endowments and Islamic affairs and made up of representatives, at least with the rank of assistant under secretary, from the Interior, Information, Education, and Social Affairs and Labor Ministries, in addition to an adviser from the Justice Ministry and a specialist professor from Kuwait University. The task of this committee would be to examine the moral phenomena that have recently been spreading in our society and find the appropriate solutions. The proposal has now been referred to the government. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Agreement Signed For Supply of 12 French Helicopters

MM0508094796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3 Aug 96 p 4

[Report by 'Abdallah Nasir al-Shahri: "Prince Sultan, Millon Sign Agreement Under Which Saudi Arabia Will Be Supplied With 12 Helicopters"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Riyadh — Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Saudi second deputy prime minister and defense and aviation minister, and his French opposite number Charles Millon recently signed — each in his own country — an agreement under which France will supply the Saudi Air Force with 12 Cougar helicopters for transportation and logistic support, in addition to providing training and technical expertise.

Military sources in Riyadh declined to reveal the value of the deal. However, they told AL-HAYAH that "this type of helicopter faced tough competition from the U.S. helicopter Sikorsky-70 Black Hawk, which has been in service in the Kingdom since the beginning of the nineties." [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia: Shura Council Approves Accord With Italy

LD0408201596 Riyadh SPA in English 1916 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Aug 4, SPA — The al-Shura (Consultative) Council held here today its 16th ordinary session for 1417 h, which was presided over by its chairman Shaykh Muhammad Bin- Ibrahim Bin-Jubayr. During the session, the council reviewed the proceedings of its 14th and 15th sessions held earlier as well as completed the debate on a report which was presented to it by its social affairs and health committee on organizing dairy factories in the kingdom.

The council also discussed a report of its security affairs committee on a memorandum of understanding between ministries of interior in Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Italy concerning the problem of terrorism and unlawful trade in drugs. After a review, the council approved the memorandum of understanding and recommended it for signing.

Saudi Arabia: Official Says Kingdom One of 'Safest' Countries in World

LD0208142596 Riyadh SPA in English 1216 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] London, Aug 2, SPA — Deputy Minister of Defense and Aviation and Deputy Inspector General Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has attributed the Kingdom's comprehensive development to the wisdom of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz who, during the time of King Khalid, proposed the establishment of three credit banks to boost industrial, real estate and agricultural development in Saudi Arabia.

He said King Khalid approved the proposal because it was a sound opinion and hence the banks were set up.

Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman said in an interview with the London-based Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) that he could never give the late King 'Abd-al-'Aziz his due credit, and stressed that the history of the founder of Saudi Arabia has been written "with golden ink" by historians.

He affirmed that Saudi Arabia is one of the safest countries in the world and "we are proud of this." He added that the two recent explosions in Riyadh and Al Khubar were perpetrated by malicious parties because the Kingdom is based on the principles of the glorious Quran and Islamic law.

"The Kingdom can be targetted because it is not a country of instability, nor could its basis be shaken, and it would not be involved in unhealthy behaviour. It is a country of stability and principles,"

Pointing out that terrorism is an international phenomenon, Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman stressed that the two criminal explosions which occurred in Riyadh and Al Khubar have not undermined the security of the Kingdom. He added in this connection that security authorities have managed to apprehend the perpetrators of the Riyadh bombing and carry out the Sharia ruling on them. It will manage to apprehend the perpetrators of the Al Khubar incident as well with God's willing, he said.

Asked about measures to be taken by the Kingdom to prevent similar future incidents, he stressed that the Saudi security apparatus was advancing steadily, not just because of the explosion, but in a natural and continuous way.

He added that a pan-Arab conference was held in Cairo to coordinate anti-terrorism efforts and exchange information about terrorism.

He described the Kingdom's relations with neighbouring states as good and expressed pleasure for Saudi Arabia's mediation efforts to end the dispute between Qatar and Bahrain, at the request of both countries.

He pointed to the close cooperation between Saudi and U.S. security authorities vis-a-vis the Al Khubar bombing.

Asked about Saudi Arabia's efforts to boost its military capabilities, he said those who do not know the Kingdom make up percentages about its arms purchases, but they do not know that the core of the Armed Forces has only recently been established.

"We have to build the essential bases, then the Army, then the individuals, then the weapons. all three together can cost a great deal, but other armies have had the essential basis (of the armed forces) set up many years ago," he said, adding that most of the military infrastructure has been established.

He added that the Kingdom diversifies its arms purchases, which means it buys weapons from several countries, "but diversification is not enough. What is enough is to guarantee continuation of these weapons' desired performance."

He said Arab Gulf states guarantee the security of the Gulf by depending on God, themselves and the cooperation of their friends. "This does not mean depending on armies consisting of hundreds of thousands or millions... quality is the most important thing," he said.

Asked about the role of Jazirah [Peninsula] Shield forces, Prince 'Abd-al-Rahman said they represent a means of the alliance among Arab Gulf states and actual cooperation in the military fields. They are basically deployed in Saudi Arabia, he added. He said that in view of the directives of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] Supreme Council, the Jazirah Shield forces are currently expanding and expressed hope that this structure would be more complete soon.

He described the Saudi role in the liberation of Kuwait as essential, and stressed that the odd thing was Iraq's aggression against a fellow Arab state. He ruled out the possibility that Saddam alone was behind this aggression and expressed belief that he was motivated by other parties, but the end result was lost confidence among many countries in the region.

Referring to Saudi airports, he said there are now 23 of them, and a 24th one will be completed soon. He added that the kingdom has three international airports in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dhahran, which are considered among the most advanced in the world.

Asked about malicious campaigns against Saudi Arabia and Islam, he said they had been around for many years and prayed to Allah to keep the Muslim nation steadfast on the right path until the day of judgement.

Saudi Arabia: Daily Hails Security Agreement With Yemen

JN0208201696 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 29 Jul 96 p 7

[Editorial: "An Important Agreement To Entrench Security"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Security in any part of the world has become an important quest which all countries seek to achieve on the ground in order to maintain their achievements, establishments, and the safety of their peoples. The world today is suffering from various forms of organized crime practiced by organizations that are financially supported by drug trafficking and smuggling of weapons. The security of peoples, particularly those in the region, will remain threatened and vulnerable as long as the criminals can infiltrate from one country to another in the absence of a law on the extradition of criminals.

Given the importance of regional security, the kingdom and Yemen signed a security agreement on 27 July. The agreement provides for cooperation in combating drugs, smuggling, and infiltrations, and the extradition of criminals. This is an important agreement that will lead in the long run to safeguarding a host of joint security interests. It will also boost the two countries' stability and protect them from the dangers of drugs, which started to spread markedly in many countries due to the absence of restrictions and laws which, if implemented, would put an end to smuggling drugs through crossings and borders.

No doubt, this security agreement between the two sisterly countries, which all Arab countries seek to emulate, will enhance the mutual security interests of the Kingdom and Yemen. It will also foster the stability and tranquility of the two countries, which seek to make more efforts and establish further cooperation in all fields to achieve their higher interests. This security agreement will have a good impact in terms of putting an end to smuggling of drugs and weapons through the two countries' joint land and maritime borders. It will also prevent the smuggling of all kinds of explosives. The perpetrators of the explosion in al-'Ulayya quarter in Riyadh in November smuggled from Yemen a quantity of the explosives they used in their ugly crime. This makes the signing of this security agreement even more important.

The methods of smuggling drugs, weapons, and explosives have developed. Therefore, it has become extremely important to foil these attempts through new and updated methods. In fact, cooperation among a host of countries, particularly those in a single geographical region, to uproot these crimes represents a good and integrated effort. It will lead to outstanding results, thanks to the exchange of expertise and information regarding the tracking down of smugglers and criminals who are at large.

Yemen

Yemen: Government Ready To Host Meeting For Somali Leaders

JN0408145596 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source told SABA' that while it is watching the tragic incidents in fraternal Somalia with extreme concern, the Government of the Republic of Yemen appeals to the brothers, the Somali people, to stop internecine fighting by resorting to reason and logic, solving all differences through dialogue, and seeking help from Somali political and social figures known for their wisdom in order to preserve the lives of the Somali people and place the higher interests of their homeland above all other concerns.

The source added that the Republic of Yemen — leadership, government, and people — extends condolences to the fraternal Somali people on the death of one of their leaders, Mohamed Farah Aidid, and honestly urges all his colleagues and supporters, as well as the leaders of the Somali factions, to resort to reason and logic, immediately end the fighting, solve all differences, work in a brotherly spirit, overcome the tragic and destructive results of the fighting, and try to restore security and stability in their homeland.

Concluding, the source said that the Government of the Republic of Yemen is ready to host a reconciliatory meeting of all Somali leaders in the presence of representatives from the fraternal Arab countries in order to replace violence with peace, save the lives of innocent citizens, and rebuild a united Somalia.

The Republic of Yemen expresses its brotherly, honest position toward the fraternal Somali brothers, and reaffirms its support for the fraternal Somali people, their unity, the safety of their territories, and everything that can achieve security, stability, and prosperity for them.

Iraq: UN Envoy Briefs Members on U.S. 'Obstruction' of Agreement

JN0308145696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations, 3 Aug (INA) — Iraq urged the Security Council members to assume their responsibilities by pressuring the United States to adopt a list of procedures presented to Sanctions Committee 661. This request was made last night by Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent UN envoy, during his meetings with Security Council permanent and nonpermanent member states.

Ambassador Hamdun told reporters that the United States does not have a technical explanation for its obstruction of the adoption of the list by the Sanctions Committee. He added that this obstruction means prolonging the suffering of the Iraqi people as a result of the economic embargo. Adopting the list of procedures will lead to the implementation of the agreement on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs. This will help the Iraqi people overcome their ordeal caused by the blockade.

Ambassador Hamdun is expected to pursue his contacts on Monday [5 August] with other Security Council members for the same purpose. Ambassador Hamdun said the message he delivered yesterday to the UN General Secretariat deals with the cost of producing and pumping Iraqi oil, noting that Iraq has its own view of this issue and that this view is known to the UN General Secretariat.

The memorandum of understanding signed between Iraq and the UN General Secretariat on 20 May 1996 has an annex that includes a letter signed by Ambassador Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari addressed to the UN legal adviser Hans Corell.

Iraq: Envoy Protests U.S. Jets Dropping Flares on Water Complex

NC0408133696 Cairo MENA in English 1320 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Aug 4 (MENA)—Iraq has lodged a protest with the Arab League against American jets dropping flares on a water complex in the Dhi Qar Governorate, in the south of the country; the complex provides the residents of this area with their water supply.

Iraq's permanent representative to the League Ambassador Nabil Najm requested in a memorandum to League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, to explain these irresponsible actions and violations of international principles to the Arab countries.

Iraq: Commentary on Moving U.S. Troops in Saudi Arabia

JN0308192696 Baghdad Mother of Battles Radio in Arabic 1800 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Arabs: Peace be upon you. U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry can speak about U.S. troops in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula as if they were well protected. He can also ask others to finance moving U.S. troops who are in their country. This is because he tells them: These forces came to protect you and now they must be protected so that they can carry out their duties. William Perry can raise with the concerned rulers the issue of fear of illusionary foreign threats and tell them that their regimes can never be safe from threats without U.S. troops. He can also provide his forces in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and elsewhere with the most sophisticated technology and equipment to protect these forces.

William Perry can do all of the above and brag about it. However, he cannot convince himself that he is being honest and that his forces are really well protected for a very simple reason. William Perry, secretary of defense of the U.S. superpower, cannot deny the truth about his and the U.S. Administration's inability to provide protection for itself, its agencies, and citizens even inside the United States itself.

It is axiomatic that the one who lacks something cannot provide others with it. This means that the U.S. Administration's inability to provide security and stability inside the United States clearly signals its inability to provide protection for others. This is because the issue is not a technical one, but a human one that involves the stands of human beings and whether they approve or reject the presence of foreign forces on their territory.

The best evidence of this is that the barefooted, hungry, and poor people in Somalia managed to defeat U.S. troops. Another good example is U.S. defeat in Vietnam and Lebanon. A third example is the failure of the United States and all the horrible world powers that sided with it to achieve their criminal objectives against Iraq, its leadership, and victorious revolution.

We say this to anyone who thinks that the U.S. Administration can provide security for his regime and his seat. Protection and stability are provided by the people. The people alone are capable of defeating state-of-the-art technology by a genuine popular art named revolution against injustice, rejection of oppression, and jihad for freedom, independence, and dignity.

Iraq: PUK, DPIK Sign Agreement Ending Hostilities Against Iran

NC0208191596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1842 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara, 2 Aug (MENA)—It was announced here today that the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Democratic Party of Iranian Kordestan [DPIK] have concluded an agreement according to which the DPIK will end its hostilities against Iran.

A PUK statement in Ankara, a copy of which was obtained by MENA, announced that the agreement followed meetings between the leaders of both parties during which the effects of the recent Iranian invasion of Iraqi Kurdistan was discussed.

The statement points out that the agreement provides for the DPIK to stop using Iraqi Kurdistan as a springboard for operations against Iranian territories. It also states that the PUK will extend assistance to the DPIK to help guarantee the security of its members on Iraqi Kurdistan territory that is under PUK control.

The statement voiced hope that this agreement will allay Iran's fears and prevent any future Iranian military action in the area. The statement added that the PUK hopes that all the parties mentioned in the agreement will meet their commitments in a way that will prevent further Iranian operations.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Cites Olympic Weight Lifter on Defection

NC0208150896 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad, 29, who carried the Iraqi flag at the opening ceremony of the current Olympic Games in Atlanta, has stated that he does not regret his defection from the hell of Saddam Husayn and his two sons 'Udayy and Qusayy. He explained that his defection is an expression of his opposition to the political, social, and economic oppression of the Iraqi people.

Ahmad, a native of al-Basrah, has asked for political asylum in the United States. During a news conference, he said that his family is in a safe place inside Iraq.

Ra'id Ahmad left the Olympic village several days ago and stayed at an Atlanta hotel pending a reply from U.S. immigration authorities to his asylum application. He refused to contact the Iraqi Olympic delegation, which claimed that it had a letter for him from his family.

Iraq: Authorities Said Pursuing Defecting Weight Lifter's Family

NC0408145596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The authorities of the tyrant's regime have threatened to pursue the family members of the Iraqi weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad, who obtained asylum in the United States after defecting during the Atlanta Olympic Games.

The newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT cites informed sources in Amman as saying that the regime's security organs have decided to take revenge on the family of Iraqi sportsman Ra'id Ahmad, who exposed the regime's continued brutality and destructive terrorism against the Iraqi people.

The U.S. Government has granted weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad the right to political asylum after the Immigration and Naturalization Service announced it is sure that he faces execution if he returns to Iraq.

The Iraqi opposition stated that the Iraqi weight lifter's defection is shining proof of the brutal catastrophe that the Iraqi people are suffering under the rule of a ruthless and bloody regime.

Iraq: 15 Said Killed in Ruling Family Infighting Mid-July

NC0208150096 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to news agencies, armed clashes occurred in the Huwayjah subdistrict on 17 July between rival groups belonging to the ruling family. Fifteen people were killed and dozens of others were injured in the fighting.

The reports say that the fighting started with clashes between tribesmen who support Sab'awi [al-Tikriti, Saddam Husayn's half brother] and loyalists of 'Udayy Saddam Husayn. The fighting escalated to the point where 'Udayy ordered the so-called Saddam Fedayeen forces, which he commands, to intervene against his uncle's supporters.

Iraq: Turkey's Extension of Poised Hammer Mandate Criticized

JN0408115796 Baghdad INA in English 1003 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Aug 4, INA—An Iraqi paper has criticized the decision to extend the presence of Force Hammer [as received] in Turkey.

In an article on Sunday, AL-THAWRAH, organ of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party said foreign troops presence on Turkish soil only serves the United States and its conspiracies against Iraq. It also threatens the security of the region in general, it said.

The daily refuted justifications given by the Turkish Government, saying that speaking about a refugee crisis is only an illusive attempt by the American Administration to frighten the Turkish Government and push it to keep the Force Hammer in Turkey against the will, desire and interest of the Turkish people.

AL-THAWRAH warned of the dangers that lie behind the use by the U.S. of the Kurdish card as a pretext to interfere in the region's affairs to serve its strategic and imperialist interests in the region.

It added that the use of this card to exert pressure on Iraq is a thing that harms Turkey in the first place.

AL-THAWRAH expressed confidence the present Turkish Government would be aware that the Kurdish card constitutes a threat to the security and stability of the whole region.

The daily urged the Turkish Government to consolidate its relations with the central authority in Iraq and work towards lifting the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people, saying that Turkey's national interest can be guaranteed through the return of the national Iraqi authority to the north and putting an end to chaos and instability in the region caused by foreign intervention and the existence of American forces on Turkish soil.

Iraq: Opposition Forces Command Said Seeking General Uprising

NC0408144996 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The command of the Iraqi opposition forces inside Iraq has pledged to escalate its military actions against Baghdad's regime and to seriously seek to bring about the swift downfall of Baghdad's tyrant and his terrorist regime.

In leaflets distributed in all Iraqi cities, the command of the Iraqi opposition forces takes responsibility for trying to assassinate Saddam Husayn.

It adds that it is trying to start a civilian and military uprising to end the era of Saddam's despotism.

The leaflets call on Iraqi opposition factions abroad to close ranks and reinvigorate their field activities to end the calamity that has befallen Iraq as a result of the Baghdad ruler's continued hold on power.

Iraq: Turkey Urged To Establish Trade Ties With Country

JN0508095296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0605 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 5 Aug (INA) — An Iraqi newspaper asserts that Turkey's implementation of its right, as enshrined in Article 50 of the UN Charter, to trade interaction with Iraq will pave the way for an economic boom and check the great material losses incurred by the Turkish people due to the blockade against Iraq.

In an article published here today, AL-THAWRAH says: The interests of the Turkish people require that the Turkish Government officially ask the Sanctions Committee to agree to open channels of trade with Iraq. This is also necessitated by the need to ensure the stability of the security situation in southeast Turkey, improve the general economic situation in Turkey, and boost economic relations between the two countries.

The newspaper, the organ of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds: If such steps are taken, they will open the door for other countries that were also harmed by the unjust blockade to demand the removal of the injustice done to them in compliance with the UN Charter, which gives them the right to trade with countries under embargo because they have been harmed by the international resolution.

The paper adds: The Turkish request will support Iraq's legitimate and humanitarian demand that the Security Council meet its obligations, represented by the implementation of paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 as a preliminary step toward a comprehensive lifting of the blockade against the Iraqi people. This does not represent a mere Iraqi request. It is the desire of the peoples and countries of the world.

Israel: Gold Updates U.S. Administration on Settlement Resolution

TA0308181896 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, briefed the U.S. Administration on yesterday's cabinet resolution regarding the settlements. Our correspondent in Washington Ya'aqov Ahime'ir reports that this was the main reason for Mr. Gold's urgent trip to Washington, where he met the U.S. peace team headed by Dennis Ross. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher joined the meeting at a certain point.

Our correspondent reports that Dr. Gold explained to the administration representatives that the cabinet decision does not have an immediate operative meaning, but that it only removed some of the restrictions the previous government imposed. He added that there is no plan to build new settlements any time soon.

Gold's mission followed the prime minister's promise to President Clinton not to surprise the U.S. Administration on the settlement issue. It is very probable that in the discussions Gold had, he also raised the option of promoting an arrangement in south Lebanon as a test to Syria's intentions.

Israel: Netanyahu on Settlements, PA, Lebanon-First

TA0208174296 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by political correspondent Shlomo Ganor; in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; in the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem on 2 August; processed from the Hebrew — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ganor] Mr. Prime Minister, how are we to read today's cabinet resolution to unfreeze building in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza?

[Netanyahu] It should be read exactly as it reads. We are stopping the artificial drying out that was the previous government's policy for the Judaea and Samaria settlements. The previous government imposed all kinds of decrees, restrictions, chains, and bonds on the natural development of the settlements. It did not impose similar restrictions on the Arab settlement of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, nor did it impose such restriction on Jewish settlements inside the Green Line. Naturally, we do not accept this policy. Hence, today we lifted the ban. At the same time, every orderly government has its checks and balances and means to control building and settlement policies, which are part of today's resolution. This is what it means: Lifting the ban; we have not decided yet what we will do as far as initiated policy is concerned.

[Ganor] Are we to expect new settlements?

[Netanyahu] If it comes up as part of the cabinet policy, we will bring it up for the ministers to decide. We did not decide so today. Today, we created room to maneuver, if you will. We canceled past restrictions, but we left the issue of policy for our future discussions.

[Ganor] Are you aware of the reactions against settlements in the Arab and Western world? Do you expect the world to understand?

[Netanyahu] I do, and I can tell you — based on talks I had with many statesmen — that the world understands that this is a different government with a different policy. I cannot tell you now what the scope of our decision will be, the amount of resources we will invest in Judaea and Samaria, or whether or not we will set up new settlements. This is for the future. What could be more natural for a government with a commitment to Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisra'el and to full equality between all the citizens of the State of Israel than to lift these bans?

[Ganor] It seems that the Palestinian Authority [PA] has a different interpretation of its activity in East Jerusalem. Where does your government stand regarding Palestinian activity there?

[Netanyahu] There is no room for interpretation here! There is no gray area or middle ground here. The PA made an explicit commitment to avoid governmental activity in Jerusalem, including offices of the PA or PA representatives. We insist on this and we have also taken steps against an attempt to expand activity, such as offices of a PA representative. We insist that the PA offices in East Jerusalem close, just as we insist that activities in Jerusalem by Palestinian security personnel stop immediately. This has been communicated to the PA very clearly. I hope the Palestinian side understands that we are very serious about this issue, that for us this is not yet another spot or element in our relations; this is a matter of primary importance. We demand that the agreement be respected, and if it is not, we will have to take steps. I very much hope that they do not force us to reach that point, because we want peace.

[Ganor] Does this mean that talks with PA may be frozen for now?

[Netanyahu] Just the opposite. These very days, I am completing my preparations for an official proposal to restart the talks. Minister Levi discussed this with Yasir 'Arafat when they met. I intend to offer a dialogue apparatus and agenda in the coming days in which we will discuss everything we have to discuss. We have claims about certain things and the Palestinian side has its grievances, such as Hebron, for example. We will have to discuss all those issues so that we can make progress, and this is what we intend to do. We are not playing games.

[Ganor] You are going to Jordan on 5 August. How do you view relations between the two countries?

[Netanyahu] They are excellent, and will get even better. I feel there are problems in implementing the bilateral agreements between us in the economic sphere. I must tell you that sitting in this room, I spend hours dealing with red tape. Thank God, we have quite a large bureaucratic system in this country which, from our side, blocks many things that are important for the development of trade ties between us and Jordan. Let me tell you, they are important for the Palestinians as well. If there is bilateral trade, it will in fact be trilateral. The Palestinians will benefit from it too. This, to a large extent, is being currently curbed by bureaucratic obstacles on our part, and I intend to deal with and remove them.

[Ganor] King Husayn is meeting the Syrian president in Damascus tomorrow. Is he carrying a message from you, the Israeli prime minister, to President al-Asad?

[Netanyahu] He is certainly carrying the messages King Husayn has to deliver. He has a broad vision and, I would say, a deep perspective which is the result of years of experience in our region. I am certain that he will tell the Syrian president what he thinks.

[Ganor] Will the things he will say follow from the meeting you two had last week?

[Netanyahu] I will not comment on the reports and headlines. This must be intriguing to read, but I do not have to confirm or deny every story. This is my policy regarding such reports.

[Ganor] Publicly, the Syrians have rejected your Lebanon First idea. Could you elaborate on this idea this evening?

[Netanyahu] I am primarily interested in entering peace negotiations with Syria. I am saying this very clearly. I also believe, and I know many do not, that eventually we will attain full and contractual peace with Syria. This is why I suggest that we examine options to diminish friction and attain a solution in Lebanon, under which the war that Hizballah is waging against us will stop. As you know very well, if we learn that Hizballah has been disarmed in south Lebanon, that it has no military ability, that it will no longer attack us, that our allies in south Lebanon have been appropriately cared for, and that our northern border is sufficiently protected from the Lebanese side — we will definitely have no reason to be in Lebanon. What could be simpler than that?

We are offering a way for us to leave the territory of an Arab country and, I believe, to create confidence and understanding between us and Syria, and everybody knows the truth about Lebanon. I believe it will make a significant contribution toward the attainment of a broader understanding that will, eventually, bring an official peace between us and Syria.

[Ganor] Could you say tonight when the negotiations with Syria will resume?

[Netanyahu] I hope soon. I cannot specify a date. We are talking about this. It is certainly not low on our list of priorities.

Israel: Foreign Ministry Preparing Document on Settlement Policy

TA0408163796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Foreign Ministry has started drafting the information document which will explain the government's decision to abolish the freeze on construction activity in the territories. Among other things, the draft document says that this is not an operative decision. Our political correspondent reports that the decision is aimed at satisfying the needs of the natural population growth in the territories, but that the annulment of the settlement freeze will not bring about land confiscation. The authors of the Foreign Ministry document also emphasize that the government has not decided to build new settlements, adding that supervisory mechanisms will be established for supervising the construction plans.

Israel: PA Jerusalem Office Given Until 'Noon' 5 Aug To Close

TA0408125796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem police representatives presented Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir, a Palestinian Authority [PA] member, an order to close by noon tomorrow the office he opened in Bayt Hanina. Before then, he can appeal the order to Internal Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani. The order says that if 'Abd-al-Qadir does not close the office himself the police will do so.

Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports that Faysal al-Husayni visited the office this morning and urged

'Abd-al-Qadir to accede to the order, but he rejected the request.

Minister Qahalani said that on Friday [2 August] he approved and signed the order to close the office, but before ordering its implementation, there were contacts with Yasir 'Arafat to convince 'Abd-al-Qadir. Only after the diplomacy failed was it decided to implement the order, Minister Qahalani said.

Israel: Netanyahu Comments on Relations With Arab Neighbors

TA0408163096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Addressing an Israel Bonds delegation this morning, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu spoke of Israel's relations with its Arab neighbors. He said that peace with nondemocratic regimes has to start with their leaders.

[Begin Netanyahu recording] I don't expect the democratization of the Middle East in the foreseeable future, and therefore, the security aspect has to be insisted upon — and we do. The normalization aspect has to be a decision, a constant decision and a conscious decision by the leaders of the Arab governments — because it cannot come from below. There is no mechanism, in the absence of democracy, to bring it from below. It must come from the top. And this is one of the things that we will have to negotiate with our neighbors.

I can tell you that in the case of the country to which I am going tomorrow, Jordan, there is a clear commitment both for security and normalization, and it is coming from the top. I spoke two weeks ago to President Mubarak. There is a clear commitment of both countries now for normalization. We had peace with security, but we did not have peace with normalization, because we had half of normalization with Egypt. And I think and I believe that we can change it, especially by linking our countries economically in various projects and various efforts that are now being accelerated for the first time.

I want to do the same with the Palestinians. We insist on security; we will not allow a descent back into those terror rampages — it will not happen. And if anybody deludes himself that we will allow ourselves to continue on course while our cities are being bombed, our buses explode, they are wrong. We will correct that misapprehension, but we don't want to get to that point. But equally, we expect leadership on the part of the Palestinians — on the part of 'Arafat — to explain and to inculcate among his people the idea that war with Israel is over, that Israel is here to stay, that the Palestinian-Arabs will have to make their peace with them, just as the Jewish state has to make its peace with them.

Which leaves us with Syria. In the case of Syria, we must have peace built on security — and we insist on it. We know that Syria has its own designs, its own aims. We don't prevent Syria from bringing those concerns to the table. We don't tell Syria to accept our views on the future of the Golan Heights as a precondition to enter negotiations, and nor should they ask us to accept their views. We will insist on peace, and we would hope that there would be normalization — peace with security — and we would hope that there will be normalization down the line. [end recording]

Israel: Netanyahu Interviewed on Peace Process, Syria

NC0408191696 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 4 Aug 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by MBC correspondent Nabil al-Khatib in Jerusalem on 4 August—recorded; Netanyahu speaks in English with superimposed Arabic translation]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Netanyahu] We have different interpretations as to how much land for how much peace. We can spend the rest of the time until the end of my term as prime minister discussing the different interpretations. We have already been through that. We solved this problem at Madrid. We agreed that using the Madrid formula as a term of reference enables the peace process to start. For example, we recognized Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for this formula. All the states that participated at Madrid approved of this. We did this when Likud was in power. I did too. With this benchmark, I propose that we continue the process.

[Al-Khatib] Mr. Prime Minister, yesterday's decision by the Israeli Cabinet to increase the number of settlers or expand the Israeli settlements in the West Bank gives the impression that there is nothing for the Palestinians and Israel to negotiate about.

[Netanyahu] We made a decision not to discriminate between Jewish settlements and the communities in the territories. The settlers are in a natural state of growth. Arab families know this. This is a normal matter that was tackled by the previous government when there was a population growth of 40 percent, in addition to natural growth. The previous government had an official policy of stifling this growth. But we have not adopted a policy to build new settlements. This remains a pending issue.

Regarding the Palestinian track, I generally insist on three matters. First, courtesy and leniency from both sides. I also insist on security; if another bus is blown up, not only Jews and Arabs will be killed, but the progress of the process as well. Finally, I insist on Jerusalem, as agreed upon.

[Al-Khatib] You have put forth the principle, or idea, or slogan of Lebanon first. Do you really believe that this proposal is pragmatic and can receive a positive response in Beirut and Damascus?

[Netanyahu] In Lebanon we have a potential flashpoint. The problem in Lebanon is the escalation that has been going on since 1991. But the escalation is not good for us or Syria. No one knows where it will lead. However, I am sure that it will lead to a result harmful to peace. I believe the situation in Lebanon should be defused. For us, this is a problem that can be easily solved. We are prepared to leave Lebanon if we can guarantee our security and the interests of our allies in southern Lebanon.

[Al-Khatib] Let us imagine that you and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad meet. What will you talk about if you continue to rule out the possibility of the Israeli forces withdrawing from the Syrian Golan?

[Netanyahu] I think that if Israel and Syria could sit down together—and I think this is possible—I do not rule out the possibility of reaching a real and permanent peace between us. This is not easy, but it is not beyond our capabilities.

[Al-Khatib] I mean your rejection of the land-for-peace principle.

[Netanyahu] There are many areas in which there can be give and take, and others in which there is mutual interest without give and take. We are not free to benefit from these areas yet because we are not in the midst of the peace process. Therefore, we must resume it with open minds.

Israel: Bentzur To Head U.S-Israeli Antiterror Team

TA0308133296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Eytan Bentzur, acting director general of the Foreign Ministry, will head the Israel-U.S. interministerial team on the issue of terror. This was decided over the weekend. The team will begin working immediately after Foreign Minister David Levi and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher meet next month in the United States. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the decision to set up the team was made at the Sharm al-Shaykh conference. The team will coordinate cooperation, exchanges of information, and legislative initiatives pertaining to the war against terror.

Israel: Hebron Redeployment May Occur by 'End of This Month'

TA0408184196 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 4 Aug 96

[Studio Talk between anchor Micky Haimowitz and political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Haimowitz] 'Imanu'el Rosen, despite the vagueness on the ground regarding the Hebron redeployment issue, the prime minister's bureau seems to have made up its mind on the issue.

[Rosen] No official decision has been made yet, but I believe the general trend can be discerned even through the intentionally vague remarks of Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave:

[Begin Nave recording] The government will have to hold a discussion and decide its position on the Hebron issue in the near future. After this happens we will hold a dialogue with the Palestinians. This will probably happen in the next few weeks. [end recording]

[Rosen] The prime minister wants to implement this problematic move very quickly. This week the professional levels will hold a meeting, and next week the defense minister and 'Arafat will apparently hold a meeting. In about two weeks the government will endorse this decision, and the dialogue with the Palestinians will start. If no problems and crises crop up, the redeployment will start as soon as the end of this month.

[Haimowitz] 'Imanu'el, do you believe all of this is aimed at tempering the difficult impression created by the decision on the settlements?

[Rosen] I do not think so. I believe this decision would have been made in any event. As far as the settlements are concerned, the government's information line is that this was a purely theoretical decision. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, returned to Israel a short time ago and is currently telling the prime minister that there is no crisis in our relations with the United States over this issue. Not only is there no crisis, we can now report that another meeting between the prime minister and U.S. President Bill Clinton will take place in about one month in New York.

[Jerusalem Israel Channel 1 Television Network in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 4 August includes an interview with Agriculture and Environment Minister Refa'el Eytan by political correspondent Dan Scemama, in which Eytan says: "I support a strong, secure, and large Jewish settlement in Hebron — even larger than it is today."

[Asked by Scemama what he mean by larger than today, Eytan replies: "Ten times larger than the present 400 settlers — namely, 4,000. I do not understand why Jews are not allowed to live in Hebron, while Arabs can live in Haifa or Yafo."]

[Haimowitz] Tomorrow the prime minister departs for a meeting with King Husayn, who is also very concerned about the settlements issue.

[Rosen] I assume that in this meeting the prime minister will make some concessions to King Husayn, especially on the Palestinian track — perhaps in the form of additional easing measures regarding the closure.

Meanwhile it seems that the Foreign Ministry people are those who are showing great concern about tomorrow's meeting, seeing that they have been totally removed from preparing this meeting. Senior Foreign Ministry officials told us today that the prime minister has enough room for his wife and secretary, but no room for even one Foreign Ministry representative. The Foreign Ministry has nothing to do with tomorrow's visit. The prime minister has neutralized the ministry and totally ignores the professional level.

This evening Dani Nave reacted to these charges by saying that excellent relations prevail between the two ministries, especially between the prime minister and the foreign minister.

Israel: Deputy Prime Minister Confirms 'Secret' Contacts With Syria

TA0208174996 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Prime Minister Moshe Qatzav confirmed this evening that secret contacts are indeed taking place between Israel and Syria. Minister Qatzav, currently in Paris, told our correspondent Yo'av Tocker that, for now, these are not negotiations with the Syrians, rather the beginning of talks held through American mediators.

[Israel Jerusalem Television Channel 2 in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 2 August carries an announcer-read report adding: "Sources in the Prime Minister's Office claimed today that the recent contacts Netanyahu has been holding with Arab elements, mainly the secret meeting with King Husayn last weekend in London, are primarily meant to clarify the new Israeli policy regarding the negotiations with the Palestinians, and focus less on resuming the negotiations with Syria."]

Israel: Netanyahu's Upcoming Visit to Jordan Previewed

TA0408163296 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 4 Aug 96

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[FBIS Translated Text] The absence of Foreign Ministry representatives from the large entourage that will accompany Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on his first official visit to Jordan tomorrow is more evidence that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu tends to leave the Foreign Ministry out of political moves. The political contacts are meanwhile conducted by political adviser Dr. Dore Gold, who has already appointed an aide on Jordanian affairs: Moti Kristal, a former staffer in the Defense Ministry's legal bureau, whose title has been meanwhile modified to Arab affairs adviser in the political adviser's bureau.

Although Foreign Ministry staffers were not invited to Jordan, Netanyahu is taking along three businessmen — Ga'on, Eisenberg, and Lautman, about 15 aides, 50 journalists, and naturally, his wife Sara.

The Jordanian visit is above all a photo opportunity, which Netanyahu plans to exploit to the fullest. After the planned meeting with the king, he will pop over to Petra.

Political elements this afternoon voiced concern about the tendency to exclude professional officials. They say it applies to the Foreign Ministry, as well as to the Mosad and the army Intelligence Branch. Netanyahu is a soloist.

As for the hosts' political condition, Jordan is experiencing one of its most vulnerable moments. The public uproar that followed bread price hikes may turn out to be a ticking time bomb, and it comes on top of the general disappointment in peace with Israel, which has not provided any immediate economic boon. This situation has made the Israeli hug, with the formal ceremonies, the festive productions, and the photo opportunities, somewhat problematic for King Husayn. Netanyahu's visit shortly after his government canceled the freeze on settlement construction is not making the situation any easier for the Jordanians, who have always preferred warm but discreet relations, to the extent possible.

Jordan is demanding more than the Israeli implementation of economic pledges, such as the construction of the joint airport in Elat. It also desperately needs 50 million square meters of water, which Israel is supposed tomake available from the Jordan River, according to the peace accord.

None of this will mar tomorrow's festivities, although the absence of Foreign Ministry staffers again poses the question that has been repeatedly asked in the past few weeks: Where does all this place David Levi, the foreign minister? Does he decide on policies? Does he share Netanyahu's policy? Is he Netanyahu's confidant who can relay first-hand messages, as he did when he met 'Arafat, or a bench player in the political game? A senior political element said today: Judging from the past few weeks, the latter option is unfortunately the right answer.

Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir on Netanyahu's 'Extremely Important' Visit

JN0508062296 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu will arrive in Amman today on a visit to Jordan during which he will meet with His Majesty King Husayn and senior Jordanian officials. Netanyahu's talks in Amman will deal with all aspects of the peace process in the region. His Majesty King Husayn and Netanyahu are scheduled to hold a news conference at the end of the talks.

Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir spoke to our program about the Israeli prime minister's visit to Jordan. He said:

[Begin al-Mu'ashshir recording] The visit by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to Amman is extremely important for a number of reasons. On the regional level, Jordan is concerned about advancing the peace process and resuming negotiations on all tracks, including the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks, as soon as possible. There are also other bilateral issues that need to be discussed with Netanyahu, particularly with respect to the need to activate trade with the West Bank and Israel. Other issues include water and the Jordanian prisoners [in Israel], in addition to other topics that we need to discuss in order to promote bilateral relations. [end recording]

Jordan: King's Meeting With Israeli Prime Minister Previewed

JN0408075696 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Aug 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is due in Amman on 5 August on his first visit to the Kingdom since his election on 30 May. His Majesty King Husayn and the Israeli prime minister will hold a closed meeting. The meeting will be followed by an expanded session that will be attended by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti, and senior officials from both sides.

The talks will focus on the peace process and the need to resume it on all tracks as soon as possible, based on Madrid conference foundations and the land-for-peace principle. The two sides will also discuss the implementation of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and the obstacles encountering it.

His Majesty King Husayn and Netanyahu are scheduled to hold a joint news conference at the Royal Court at noon tomorrow.

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan will meet with the Israeli prime minister to discuss a host of bilateral issues related to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty. His majesty the king will host a luncheon in honor of the guest and the Israeli delegation. The banquet will be attended by senior Jordanian officials who are participating in the meetings.

Before leaving Jordan, Netanyahu is scheduled to visit Petra.

Jordan: Al-Kabariti Reportedly Paid 'Secret' Visit to Israel

JN0508085196 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 5 Aug 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Did al-Kabariti Visit Israel Secretly on Friday?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political observers said that Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti paid a secret lightening visit to Israel on 2 August. The observers told AL-MAJD they believe that al-Kabariti and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu held an extensive meeting during the two-hour visit, which preceded King Husayn's visit to Syria on 3 August.

In another development, AL-MAJD's correspondent in Damascus learned that the Syrian officials rejected mediation by any Arab leader between them and Israel, because they believe that Arabs are their brothers, regardless of differences, and should not be impartial mediators between them and the Israeli enemy.

Jordan: Issues for King Husayn-Netanyahu Meeting Viewed

JN0508081296 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 5 Aug 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu today pays a one-day visit to Jordan, his first after taking office in June, and the Kingdom's leadership is looking forward to clearing most outstanding issues on the bilateral front during his talks here.

High on the agenda for Mr. Netanyahu's talks here is also potential means to break the deadlock in the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese tracks of peace talks as well as to revitalise the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Much ground has already been covered in advancing the implementation of the provisions in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty," said an official. "We expect definite decisions to emerge during Mr. Netanyahu's visit," the official told the JORDAN TIMES.

The official would not elaborate, but the reference was obviously to the delay in fulfilling Israel's obligations to Jordan under the October 1994 peace treaty, particularly in providing water to the Kingdom.

Also of concern to Jordan are reports that the government of Netanyahu might backtrack on an agreement reached on converting al-'Aqabah Airport as a joint facility to serve both countries.

Also expected to be raised today's talks are bureaucratic obstacles that Israel has placed in the way of Jordan's trade with the Jewish state as well as the Palestinian territories.

In an interview with Israel Television over the weekend, Mr. Netanyahu implicitly admitted that there were such hurdles but said they need to be addressed.

Comments by Jordanian official indicated that they were highly optimistic that significant progress could be made in all the outstanding issues between Jordan and Israel on a bilateral level during the Likud leader's visit here today.

"In all his private and public comments and in diplomatic contacts, Mr. Netanyahu has reiterated his keen interest in building strong relations with Jordan," asserted an official source. "We have assurances that all pending bilateral issues will given serious attention very soon."

In a pre-election interview with the JORDAN TIMES, Mr. Netanyahu affirmed that he sought to maintain strong relations with Jordan and was committed to moves to strengthen economic ties with the Kingdom.

"We have no problems with Jordan, and building the Jordanian economy is in Israel's interest as much as it is in Jordan's," he has said.

On the political front, His Majesty King Husayn is expected to discuss with Mr. Netanyahu the outcome of talks he held with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus on Saturday.

No detail has emerged from the five-hour talks in the Syrian capital. Most of the discussions were held between the King and President al-Asad behind closed doors.

However, it is believed that one of the key topics that the King and President al-Asad discussed was a so-called Lebanon-first option under which Israel is reportedly offering a unilateral withdrawal from South Lebanon.

The King told reporters upon his return home that he was not carrying any message from President al-Asad to Mr. Netanyahu but that he stood ready to offer whatever help he could offer if asked to do so in the cause of comprehensive peace in the region.

On the Palestinian-Israeli front, Jordan will raise the issue of a recent Israeli government decision to lift restrictions on building settlements in the West Bank and seek explanations from Mr. Netanyahu according to the sources.

"First indications are that the move is a policy statement rather than an operative decision," said the official source. "We will be seeking to know what exactly the decision means."

Analysts believe that Mr. Netanyahu, despite his hardline statements against the basic Palestinians demands for a final peace accord with Israel, is fully aware that he would have to relent sooner or later.

These analysts see Mr. Netanyahu's pointed exclusion of Hawkish Ariel Sharon and others like him from any powerful cabinet post as a clear pragmatic signal and indicates the acceptance of the inevitability of having to accept compromises.

"Had the powerful housing ministry been given to someone like Sharon, we would now be finding mushrooming settlements all over the West Bank," in the worlds of an analyst. "In essence some of the key portfolios, including defence, are in the hands of relative moderates rather than hardliners who are determined to raise obstacles in the path to peace."

"The Jordanian approach to dealing with Mr. Netanyahu is based on an appreciation of his pragmatism and also the fact that he has to consider political pressure from his coalition partners in some of the hard decisions he has to take," adds the analyst.

Mr. Netanyahu is expected to be accompanied on his visit to Jordan by senior officials and key advisors as well as his wife Sarah.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESS meanwhile reported from Israel that Mr. Netanyahu sparked a row with his foreign ministry officials when he failed to invite a single one to accompany him on his visit to Jordan.

The right-wing Israeli leader will be accompanied by about 20 high-ranking officials for Monday's trip, but no-one from Foreign Minister David Levy's staff has been invited to join him for the visit, the agency said.

"This is extraordinary for a visit of such importance and breadth," a senior Israeli foreign ministry official told Israel Radio.

The ministry is also unhappy that Mr. Netanyahu's top political advisor, Dore Gold, has carried out several missions in the past few weeks including a trip to Washington without keeping Mr. Levy informed of the details.

Commentators said the ministry fears the new Israeli leaders was trying to keep a firm hand on Israel's foreign policies.

Mr. Levy has also not been brought up to date on Mr. Netanyahu's plans for the "Lebanon-first" deal with Syria, AFP said.

Mr. Netanyahu will fly to Amman by helicopter. Talks with King Husayn, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Prime Minister 'Abd- al-Karim al-Kabariti are scheduled to be held at the Royal Palace, where the King and Mr. Netanyahu will address a press conference at noon.

Mr. Netanyahu will also visit the Royal Cemetery to pay his respects to the late King 'Abdallah.

The Israeli prime minister and the delegation accompanying him will visit Petra after lunch at the Royal Palace before flying back to Israel at around 5 p.m.

Mr. Netanyahu has visited Jordan twice after the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in October 1994.

Jordan: 'Sources' Preview Husayn-al-Asad Summit

JN0308102096 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 3 Aug 96 pp 1, 26

[Report by Caroline Faraj]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian-Syrian summit between His Majesty King Husayn and his brother Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will open today. The summit is expected to last a few hours. The Jordanian delegation to this summit will include 'Abd-al-Karim al- Kabariti, the prime minister; 'Awn al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; Engineer Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation; Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, the information minister; Field Marshal 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff; and Lieutenant General Samih al-Battikhi, director of the General Intelligence Department.

Sources say that the agenda for the Jordanian-Syrian summit focuses on two main points; namely, the peace process and bilateral ties.

As regards the first point, the peace process, the sources say that it is well known that the Arab position calls for resuming the peace negotiations on all tracks as soon as possible.

The sources say that Jordan expects to hear from the Syrian leadership details about Syria's position on the peace process, particularly on the Syrian-Israeli track, as well as its views on Israel's recent "Lebanon-first" proposal and Syria's reasons for rejecting this proposal.

Diplomatic sources say that King Husayn's visit to Syria some 48 hours before his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu in Amman on 5 August is at Syria's request. Syrian officials stressed that Syria wants to sit at the negotiating table and to coordinate with Jordan. The diplomatic sources refer to what they call "new language" by Syria and the unquestionable desire to resume negotiations — on Syria's terms, of course.

In recent meetings between officials in the two countries, Jordan stressed that it fully supports Syria's demand to regain all it territories from Israel up to the 4 June 1967 lines.

The Israeli media yesterday reported that His Majesty King Husayn met secretly with Binyamin Netanyahu in London last week to discuss Israel's proposal to withdraw from Lebanon first. However, officials in the two countries refused to confirm or deny the meeting and said they know nothing about it.

Diplomatic sources also reported that Netanyahu's political adviser Dore Gold made a brief visit to Amman on 1 August and met with Jordanian Government officials to prepare for Netanyahu's visit, shortly before His Majesty King Husayn's visit to Damascus. Officials in Amman said they have no knowledge of the visit.

As regards the second point on the Jordanian-Syrian summit agenda, bilateral ties, the sources stressed that Jordan will not start a new page before the past is discussed. However, one Jordanian official said: Since the meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and President Hafiz al-Asad in Cairo on 22 June, which lasted one full hour and in which the two leaders had a frank exchange, we have begun to feel a tangible breakthrough with Syria.

Jordanian officials say that, considering the composition of the Jordanian delegation, the discussion on bilateral ties will focus on issues related to security and water. They say that security discussions will focus on the file that His Majesty King Husayn gave to President al-Asad. The file contains details on terrorist operations that aimed to undermine security and stability in Jordan, complete with photographs, addresses, and details of those who perpetrated them. The terrorists belong to Damascus-based extremist Palestinian organizations. The Jordanian security file documents 56 attempts against Jordan. Jordan believes that the Syrian authorities' recent arrest of several people whose names were mentioned in the security file that was presented by Jordan is a positive sign and clearly reflects the genuine and serious desire to improve ties. The Jordanian sources confirm that the terrorist attempts have subsided since King Husayn's meeting with al-Asad in Cairo.

The second issue on which the discussion of bilateral ties will focus is water-sharing between Syria and Jordan and Jordan's share of al-Yarmuk River water.

The water issue dates back to 1953, when Jordan and Syria signed an agreement to utilize al-Yarmuk River water and build al-Maqarin Dam, which was later known as the Unity Dam. According to the agreement, Syria had the right to pump water from the springs at 250 meters above sea level and up to 90 million cubic meters of water per year. The agreement stipulated that rainwater must be allowed to flow into al-Maqarin Dam.

One year after this agreement, an Arab League committee allocated the shares of water from al-Yarmuk River and the River Jordan. The committee comprised representatives from Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon. The committee approved Syria's demand and gave it a share of 90 million cubic meters of water from al-Yarmuk River.

Since 1967, however, Syria has built dams and is retaining the water that was supposed to flow into al-Maqarin Dam, which was never built. The number of Syrian dams in al-Yarmuk basin has reached 30, with a storage capacity of over 155 million cubic meters. Syria also exploited the water springs both in winter and summer, as well as the underground water in al-Yarmuk basin, to the extent that the flow rate of water at al-'Adasiyah [in the Jordan Valley] reached only 2,500 liters per second — that is, one-third of the flow rate when the agreement was signed in 1953.

In 1987, Syria demanded a new agreement to replace the 1953 agreement before it will consent to the building of al-Maqarin (Unity) Dam. Syria's conditions were accepted. However, Syria dealt with the new agreement in the same way it dealt with the 1953 agreement. It continued to exploit the basin's waters, build dams, dig wells, and utilize the water springs.

Information confirms that while Syria demanded a share of 90 million cubic meters in 1955 [year as published], it now exploits around 220 million cubic meters of al-Yarmuk River water.

Jordan is also expected to discuss the issue of Jordanian political prisoners in Syria.

Jordan: King Husayn Leaves For Syria on 'Brief Visit'

JN0308092596 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0900 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] His majesty the king has left for Syria on a brief visit for talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on bilateral relations and ways to boost them in various fields. The talks also cover developments in the Middle East peace process, as well as Arab and regional issues of mutual concern.

His majesty was seen off at the airport by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, a number of royal family members, and senior officials. His majesty is accompanied by his sons their Royal Highnesses Princes Hamzah and Hashim, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, the chief chamberlain, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the ministers of information, and water and irrigation.

Jordan: King's Talks With Al-Asad in Damascus Seen as 'Positive'

JN0408100196 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 4 Aug 96 pp 1, 28

[Editorial: "The Summit of Frankness"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In all measures, the Jordanian-Syrian summit, which was held in Damascus yesterday, can be described as an important step toward restoring Arab solidarity, improving relations between the two countries and peoples, and even upgrading these ties to meet the ambitions of the Jordanians and Syrians. His Majesty King Husayn's meeting with his brother President Hafiz al-Asad is a serious and qualitative attempt by the two Arab leaders to end the current stalemate of the peace process and achieve progress, provided the other party has sincere intentions and is ready to meet the obligations of this process and adhere to its terms of reference.

The lengthy talks in Damascus yesterday were positive and frank. They showed the need to resume the peace process on all tracks and renewed the Arab commitment to peace as a firm strategic option of the nation, as agreed upon at the Arab summit in Cairo in late June. The results of Damascus summit showed Jordan's unwavering commitment to devoting all its energies and credibility in the regional and international forums to support the brothers in their efforts to restore their rights in accordance with terms of reference of the peace process, the resolutions of international legitimacy, the land-for-peace principle, and the right of peoples to self-determination.

Maybe it is for this reason in particular that the Jordanian position earned the confidence and support of even those who cast doubt on or misunderstood it. Jordan did not reverse its positions. On the contrary, it continued to believe in its identity and belonging to its nation and spearheaded the ranks to defend the rights and aspirations of the nation, in compliance with the historical message of the Great Arab Revolt.

Jordan, which has never harbored any grudges or ill-intentions against any brother, is always eager to see the inter-Arab relations based on confidence, tranquility, non-interference in the internal affairs, and protection of the security and safety of the Arab countries.

The Damascus summit was marked with frankness in all the issues discussed, ranging from the peace process to bilateral relations, with all their security, political, and economic dimensions. Above all, it paved the way for cooperation and consultation, without fears, interference, or doubts and with a view to upgrading relations to the highest possible level.

Jordan: AL-DUSTUR Hopes For Successful Husayn-al-Asad Summit

JN0308114496 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Aug 96 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "The Husayn-al-Asad Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, observers will be watching Damascus, where the long-awaited summit will be held in a serious and sincere effort to restore strength and firmness to bilateral ties and lay an additional brick in the edifice of Arab solidarity, which has received a boost since the expanded Arab summit in Cairo in late June.

Strong hopes are pinned on the wisdom of the two Arab leaders and their sincere desire to promote the Jordanian-Syrian ties to the level sought by the two fraternal peoples, who are bound to one another by links of brotherhood, history, and common aspirations, and who for long sought to promote their common interests and bilateral cooperation in various areas.

The Husayn-al-Asad summit is being held in highly intricate and complicated circumstances, especially since the regional peace process is facing a highly serious turn. Consequently, discussions on the ways to salvage this process and resume talks on all tracks to achieve a just, comprehensive, and durable peace will top the agenda of the two leaders' summit.

Both Amman and Damascus share the view that the terms of reference agreed upon for the peace process at the Madrid conference must be complied with. They also believe that the land-for-peace principle and the relevant international legitimacy resolutions must be upheld. The two leaders will have the opportunity to discuss how the obstacles standing in the way of the peace process can be overcome, as well as the vigorous role Jordan can play in this regard.

Likewise, the two leaders will have the chance to discuss the ways to promote bilateral ties and remove the adverse aspects that have befallen them. They will emphasize the desire of both countries to safeguard each other's internal security and prevent any tampering or terrorist operations, especially since Jordan has, in recent months, been a target of terrorist attempts. Under no circumstances can this state of affairs be accepted, nor can the masterminds or culprits go unpunished.

Jordan is looking forward to the Jordanian-Syrian summit and views it as a step along the path to achieving a real breakthrough in bilateral ties. It is hoped that the summit will manage to lay the groundwork for good and firm relations with Jordan's northern neighbor—relations based on clarity, frankness, and mutual respect.

Jordan: Syria Pledges To Prevent 'Infiltrations' Into Jordan

MM0508111197 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Aug 96 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Syria Pledged To Prevent Infiltrations Into Jordan"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Amman — Authoritative Jordanian sources have announced that Jordanian King Husayn's talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus resulted in a Syrian pledge to prevent infiltrations into Jordan across the border.

The sources confirmed that Syria pledged not to allow members of the Damascus-based Palestinian organizations, especially the Islamic organizations such as the Islamic Jihad and Hamas, to carry out any actions designed to disrupt Jordan's security or threaten its stability.

The sources added that bilateral contacts will be held soon between the two sides to brief Jordan security quarters on the measures which have been or will be taken by Syria in this connection. The sources said that Syria informed Jordan of its refusal to resume the negotiations with Israel on the basis of the Israeli "Lebanon first" proposal, stressing its commitment to the peace process on the basis of the terms of reference of the Madrid conference and the resolutions of international legitimacy, and rejecting any conditions set by Israel for resuming the peace process.

The sources noted that the two sides agreed to iron out the obstacles obstructing a resumption of bilateral talks between the two countries and to return them to their previous status.

The sources said that the Jordanian side raised the water issue, demanding that the Syrian side implement the 1987 agreement concluded between the two sides regarding the distribution of the al-Yarmuk waters, stressing Jordan's commitment to this agreement. It was agreed to convene the joint committee for the distribution of the al-Yarmuk waters in order to discuss the water situation between the two countries, review the clauses implemented, and work to implement the other clauses. [passage omitted]

Jordan: King Returns From Damascus, Notes Syrian Peace Commitment

JN0308175596 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] The most important event in the news is His Majesty King Husayn's visit to Damascus and his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad. His majesty returned to Amman a short while ago. At a news conference, his majesty described talks with President al-Asad as successful, contributing to strengthening joint Arab action and bilateral coordination on efforts to promote the peace process.

[Begin recording] [Husayn] God be praised, it was a successful visit in the full sense of the word; a brotherly visit. We have known His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad for many years. We have spent a lifetime serving the Arab homeland and the Arab nation. It was an occasion for holding a frank discussion on many issues— indeed on all important issues concerning the peace process. I believe our positions are identical in terms of the search for a just and comprehensive peace for this region and for its peoples. We hope this will be realized, materialized in the future.

Concerning work to close ranks in the Arab world, we were in agreement on this also. With regard to bilateral relations, the visit was an occasion to discuss this issue in depth and from all dimensions. The results were all positive. God be praised, I am relieved and happy for the results of the visit.

[Correspondent] Has the Syrian president asked you to convey a message to Mr. Netanyahu when you meet him?

[Husayn] He has not asked me to convey any message. He is aware that wherever he likes and whenever he likes, I am ready to serve the goal of realizing a just and comprehensive peace and promote the march to reach that goal. Naturally, I gave him my preliminary impressions on all recent changes, and I felt that he is committed to realizing comprehensive and just peace in circumstances that make it a comprehensive and just peace in the full sense of the word.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, have you talked on Netanyahu's Lebanon-first proposal? Was there a different stand than the declared Syrian rejection of this proposal?

[Husayn] We talked on all issues, all problems, and all dimensions but I cannot—and I do not believe I have the right now— to discuss details.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, there are security issues and other issues related to water between Jordan and Syria, was ... [sentence incomplete]

[Husayn, interrupting] All issues were discussed.

[Correspondent] Is there any practical action to be taken, such as the meeting of the bilateral committee?

[Husayn] If God wills, if God wills. Departments in the two fraternal countries will continue on all levels and in all areas to deal with these issues.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, have you sensed any changes on the Syrian stand on the peace process?

[Husayn] I have not sensed any change. There is commitment to realizing a just and comprehensive peace. [end recording]

Jordan: Prime Ministry Denounces Murder of French Bishop in Algeria

JN0208122096 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] France has condemned the murder of a French Roman Catholic bishop in Algeria, but vowed it would not be deterred from seeking closer relations with the Algerian Government. The condemnation was announced by Foreign Minister Herve de Charette during a Paris news conference. Bishop Pierre Claverie of Oran was killed hours after meeting de Charette in Algiers. He said France wants calm and cordial relations with Algeria.

Here in Amman, Jordan has also condemned the murder of the French bishop. In a statement, the prime minister's office has denounced the killing and reiterated Jordan's official stand against terrorism.

Lebanon: Suspect in DC-10 Hijacking Said Palestinian, Not Lebanese

NC0408120296 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on a report carried by a foreign news agency on 30 July referring to Sa'du Muhammad Ibrahim, who is held by the U.S. judiciary on charges of attempting to hijack a Spanish airlines DC-10 on 25 July, as a Lebanese citizen who works for Lebanese agencies, a responsible source has pointed out that Ibrahim is a Palestinian. He was born in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp [in Lebanon] in 1968. He is registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA] on the card of his father, Muhammad Hashim Ibrahim, under code number 33016240. He carries a card bearing statistical number 15960. He left Lebanon with a travel document number 088415. He has never had any work relationship with Lebanese official agencies.

The source has distributed photocopies of Ibrahim's Palestinian refugee card, UNRWA card, and his airport departure slip.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Says UN Resolution 425 'Only Acceptable Solution'

MS0208124196 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 2 Aug 96 p 1

[Report by Neil Buckley in Brussels and David Gardner in London, incorporating interview with Lebanese Prime Minister al-Hariri: date and place not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mr Rafiq al-Hariri, the Lebanese prime minister, yesterday rejected suggestions that Israel might withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon under certain conditions and said the 18-year-old United Nations resolution calling for unconditional withdrawal remained the only acceptable basis for an Israeli pullout.

Mr Hariri said Lebanon had heard "nothing concrete" from Israel. He was aware only of "talk in the newspapers".

In an interview, the billionaire former businessman said UN Security Council Resolution 425, passed after Israel's first invasion of Lebanon in 1978, was the only acceptable solution. The resolution calls for complete and unconditional removal of Israeli forces.

"If Israel really wants to withdraw from the Lebanon, why do they have to find ways of making papers?" Mr Hariri asked. "Why do we have resolution 425, which asks Israel to withdraw? It is clear, simple recognised by the whole world. All they need to say is [they] are ready to implement resolution 425. They only need to make a statement of one line."

Lebanese President Ilyas Hirawi yesterday publicly rejected Israel's new "Lebanon First" policy at an army ceremony marked simultaneously in Lebanon and Syria, which with 40,000 troops stationed on Lebanese soil, is the power-broker in the country. "If Israel is now convinced that its occupation has not guaranteed its security and wants to withdraw from our occupied land," the president said, "it has to implement resolution 425."

Mr Hariri reiterated a pledge that the Lebanese government would guarantee the security of Israel's northern border if it were to withdraw.

He did not say whether this meant disarming Hizbollah, the Shia militia fighting Israeli occupation. But he said attacks on Israeli forces came from a "resistance force" which developed in response to the occupation. If occupation ended, so would the resistance.

Any decision to rein in Hizbollah, however, would depend on Syria, which licenses Hizbollah actions in part to press its own peace conditions with Israel. Damascus demands the return of the Golan Heights, ruled out by the new hardline government of Mr Benyamin Netanyahu.

Reports yesterday in the leading Israeli daily HAARETZ that Mr Netanyahu last month held secret meetings with an unnamed Syrian envoy were denied by the prime minister's office.

Throughout five years of stop-start Israeli-Syrian negotiations, Syria has publicly rejected secret talks, and insisted on US mediation.

Mr Hariri said yesterday that the direct costs of April's 17-day conflict in southern Lebanon were $200m, while the indirect costs could not be calculated. But he said work to repair the damage was progressing, and the fighting had not stemmed private investment flows into Lebanon.

The Lebanese premier said parliamentary elections starting on August 18 would encourage investment by providing further evidence of a functioning democracy.

Mr Hariri was in Brussels with other ministers to meet Mr Manuel Marin, European commissioner for Middle East relations, and diplomats from France and Ireland, which holds the European Union presidency. He will visit Dublin today for talks with Mr John Bruton, Irish prime minister, and Mr Dick Spring, foreign minister.

The parties hope to set a date for an international donor conference on aid to Lebanon, possibly later this year.

Lebanon: Representative to Cease-Fire Monitoring Committee Named

NC0208164896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Staff Colonel Mahir al-Tufayli, director of the Lebanese Army's Intelligence Branch in southern Lebanon, has been appointed as Lebanon's representative to the cease-fire monitoring committee, which was formed in line with the April understanding. France has already formed its diplomatic-military delegation to the committee under the chairmanship of Ambassador Gaussot. The U.S. diplomatic delegation to the committee includes David Greenlee and two other civilians.

For this purpose Zafir al-Hasan, the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's director general, met with the U.S. charge d'affaires Ron Schlicher and discussed administrative arrangements connected with the cease-fire monitoring committee. After the meeting Schlicher explained that the head of the U.S. delegation to the monitoring committee is communicating with the four other countries participating in the committee—Lebanon, Syria, France, and Israel—to set a date for the committee's first meeting in al-Naqurah to discuss such details as ways of moderating the meetings, extending invitations to the meetings, and communicating with the member countries.

Schlicher declined to name a date for the committee's first meeting before the U.S. delegation completes its current communications.

Lebanon: Lebanese Premier in Dublin, Interviewed on Reconstruction

LD0208132996 Dublin RTE Radio One Network in English 1220 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The taoiseach [Irish Prime Minister John Bruton] is having lunch today — not sure if it is beef or what else is on the menu — with one of the world's richest men. He is Rafiq al-Hariri, the prime minister of Lebanon. Mr. al-Hariri is a businessman who owns much of what was left of Beirut after the civil war, and has overseen the reconstruction of the country's economy. Since becoming prime minister after the elections of 1992, Mr. al- Hariri has resigned several times, but has then been persuaded to change his mind.

The 16-day bombardment of Lebanon by Israel last April shattered perceptions that fighting between Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah could be confined to the southern part of the country. So when he came on the line a short time ago, I asked Prime Minister al-Hariri how Lebanon is recovering from the setback of the April bombardment.

[Begin recording] [Al-Hariri] It affected the country, no doubt about it. We have many people, innocent people have been killed in that aggression and lot of the infrastructure has been destroyed. But, thank God, you know, the Lebanese have been united, and we and the government started repairing all the damages. And now we can say that Lebanon came over this problem.

[Unidentified correspondent] But, nonetheless, it must be a setback as well to international confidence in the eyes of investors perhaps, and also of tourists. They might not see the country as a safe place to go?

[Al-Hariri] You know, you will be surprised to know that tourism remains as it was planned to be and investors are still coming because the result of that aggression has shown that Lebanon become a strong country, and even an aggression like that did not affect the day to day life there in Lebanon.

[Correspondent] At the same time, it's been observed by many commentators, prime minister, that the peace in Lebanon is very fragile, and really the reality is that, until Syria and Israel settle, you will never be assured of peace in your country because in southern Lebanon, particularly, is the theater where their conflict is fought out.

[Al-Hariri] You see, there are many countries who do not have peace in the region but the security is assured. What is important for the people are the security, and the security is very well assured. We still have part of our country, 12 percent of our country, occupied by Israel and another 3 percent around that area [sentence as heard]. The life is not easy there. But the 85 percent of the Lebanese territory is like any other place in the world.

[Correspondent] And what is your response to reports yesterday in the Israeli newspaper HA'ARETZ that the new prime minister there, Binyamin Netanyahu, has secretly met a Syrian envoy in Jerusalem to discuss possible withdrawal from Lebanon?

[Al-Hariri] You see, we cannot comment on something we did not receive anything official about. I don't know this, I read it in the newspaper, as you did, but I have no feedback from any official sources about it. We don't know the details, we know nothing about it.

[Correspondent] Well, what is your assessment of the arrival now of the new, more hardline prime minister in Israel, Mr. Netanyahu? Do you think that is actually going to make it more difficult to achieve an all-round peace in the Middle East?

[Al-Hariri] (?We have) no doubt about it. When you have hardliner people and you are looking for peace, this will complicate the process.

[Correspondent] Finally, prime minister, can I ask you about your visit to Ireland. What is the objective of your visit to this country?

[Al-Hariri] You know, first of all, the Irish are, Ireland is participating in the peacekeeping forces in Lebanon since 1978, and I think it is a good opportunity that I came here to thank the republic about the participation on the peacekeeping forces, from one hand. From the other hand, Ireland now is the president of the European Union, and in their capacity they can be a big help for us to set the consultative group, the friends of Lebanon, to participate in the reconstruction of the country. [end recording]

Lebanon: Kafra Killa Reports Attack Against SLA Position

NC0308083596 Kafra Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0700 GMT 3 August 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The South Lebanese Army [SLA] position at Kafr Hunah was subjected to a machine gun and rocket attack last night originating from the surroundings of Birkat Jabbur. The attack did not result in any casualties. The post's personnel returned fire, backed by Israeli and SLA artillery. The magnitude of casualties inflicted on the terrorists is not known yet.

In another development, a device exploded last night close to an Israeli tank near al-Rayhan. The explosion did not result in any casualties or property damage.

Lebanon: Israeli Forces Fortify Positions; People Detained

NC0308085696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces have continued their shelling and raking operations against the liberated areas alongside the occupied border strip. They intensified their repressive acts in the towns of Bint Jubayl and al-Tirah, where they abducted a number of individuals. Meanwhile, the resistance fighters have launched a machine gun and rocket attack on the Kawkabah post. The [Israeli] attacks concentrated on Dallafah and Qilya in Western al-Biqa', where approximately 35 shells fell, causing damage to several houses. The Lahd militia [South Lebanese Army, SLA] radio has announced that the resistance fighters attacked the post of Kawkabah using machine guns and rockets.

Arrivals from the occupied strip report that the Israeli forces continue to reinforce and fortify their positions in al-Tirah, Bayt Yahun, and Bra'shit, using large bulldozers which are seen carrying out the fortification work. According to reports, the enemy and SLA soldiers have prevented citizens in al-Tirah from going to their farms to harvest wheat. They tampered with the harvest after it was collected and packed.

It has been reported that the Israeli forces used citizens to track down and pursue the resistance fighters after they found traces of blood in the aforementioned area. It was also reported that the SLA militia is searching houses randomly in the towns of Bayt Lif and Bint Jubayl, where it was disclosed that a number of youths were detained. The SLA security agents are mounting mobile roadblocks to examine identity cards and interrogate some people for hours, creating an atmosphere of terror and fear among the inhabitants of the occupied border strip.

[Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic in its broadcast at 0530 GMT reports the following:

"The Suhmur Martyrs Group of the Islamic Resistance attacked al-Ahmadi post using machine guns and rockets, inflicting direct hits against it."]

Lebanon: Israel Bombards Areas; Fires Reported

NC0308092896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israeli artillery positioned in al-Zaffatah shelled Iqlim al-Tuffah and its ridges at 0700 [0400 GMT] today. The outskirts of al-Luwayzah, Mlita, and the basin of the al-Litani river were also shelled. Thirty minutes of gunfire was also reported during the shelling. At 0900 the [Israeli] occupation heavy artillery fired 30 shells of 155-mm caliber on areas adjoining the al-Litani river basin, the hills of al-Surayri, and Jabal Abu- Rashid. The shelling continued for one hour, causing forest fires. The targeted areas are still ablaze. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Bomb Causes No Injuries; IDF, SLA Return Fire in South

TA0308124196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In south Lebanon, an explosive device was set off by an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] tank in the eastern sector of the security zone. No one was injured, and there was no damage.

Elsewhere in the sector, SLA [South Lebanese Army] positions came under mortar and automatic weapons' fire. The IDF and the SLA returned fire.

Lebanon: Israeli Planes Fly Over Ba'labakk, al-Hirmil

NC0408132196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli military aircraft carried out low-level flights over the Central Sector villages at 1215 today, breaking the sound barrier and releasing heat balloons. At 1145, Israeli warplanes flew over the al-Biqa' valley, specifically over Ba'labakk, breaking the sound barrier several times. The warplanes also flew over al-Hirmil, breaking the sound barrier.

Lebanon: Israelis Reportedly Shell Area in South

NC0408165996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to our correspondent in al-Nabatiyah, Israeli artillery deployed in al-Zaffatah shelled Jabal al-Rafi' at 1500 today. Israeli warplanes overflew al-Biqa', especially Ba'labakk, at low altitude at about 1400 today, breaking the sound barrier several times. They overflew al-Hirmil at a very high altitude, also breaking the sound barrier.

Lebanon: Islamic Resistance Attacks Israeli Post, Starts Fire

NC0508062396 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The al-Mansuri Massacre Martyrs' Group of the Islamic Resistance carried out an attack at 0645 today [0345 GMT] on the Bra'shit post when Israeli reinforcements were inside it. This attack, in which the mujahidin used rockets, medium-caliber weapons, and machine guns, started a fire inside the post which lasted for 10 minutes. A number of men were injured from among the ranks of the enemy. A Zionist helicopter, which landed inside the Unit 17 base, evacuated the post.

Lebanon: Lahd Radio Reports Attack on Israeli Army Post in South

NC0508085296 Kafra Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 0700 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli army's Bra'shit post this morning came under fire from the Iranian-Syrian enemy militia. Two Israeli soldiers were injured, one lightly and the other with intermediate injuries. The soldiers of the post responded to the sources of the shooting using the appropriate weapons.

Lebanon: Israeli, 'Resistance' Activities in South Lebanon Reported

NC0508090096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces escalated their attacks this morning in the southern areas. At around 0915 [0615 GMT] the Israeli warplanes resumed their flights over the central sector region, accompanied by helicopters, over the towns of Bra'shit and Shaqra. At 1000, the warplanes carried out mock raids at low altitude over Tyre and the area around it. Bra'shit came under hostile artillery shelling in the morning from the occupation posts in the occupied strip. The outskirts of 'Avta al-Jabal, Haddathah, and Jabal al-Za'tar near Tibnin also came under artillery shelling. In response to the repeated Israeli attacks, this morning resistance men attacked the Bra'shit hill post using machine guns and artillery shells, injuring two members of the occupation forces. The latest reports have said that resistance men fired a guided missile toward the Bayt Yahun crossing this morning.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Nasrallah Views Elections

NC0508063396 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General His Eminence al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah has affirmed that parliamentary elections, as far as Hizballah is concerned, are not a matter of prestige. They are a matter that relates to the blood of the martyrs and the prisoners in enemy prisons. He pointed out that those Hizballah nominates to run in the elections do not represent themselves, but represent Hizballah's rights and projects.

His eminence adds, in a speech he delivered in a celebration in Ba'labakk on the occasion of the passage of one week since the return of the bodies of the valiant martyrs, that the al-Biqa' region is the reservoir of the resistance that has given this nation glory and dignity. From the perspective of the state, this region is a society of outlaws.

Syria: National Security Official on Terrorism, U.S. Ties

JN0508073496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking on the program "Dialogue With the West," broadcast by Middle East Television, MBC, and the Voice of America, Dr. 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasm, member of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and head of the National Security Bureau, said terrorism must be defined to make a distinction between it and resistance. We in Syria have long called for an international conference to define terrorism and make a distinction between it and national resistance.

Dr. al-Kasm said a person who fights for his country and land is not a terrorist. Anyone who attacks others to achieve financial gain, occupy a certain position, or assume power is a terrorist. We in Syria do not condone an attack on a defenseless person. Any action that leads to moral or material damage to innocent people is an act of terrorism. It can be an individual act, as happened in Atlanta and elsewhere; a collective act by gangs and militias, as happened in Palestine at the hands of the Stern and Haganah gangs during the mandate; or state terrorism, as happened at Dayr Yasin, Kafr Qasim, Sabra and Shatila, and finally at Qana.

Dr. al-Kasm said all nations, including the United States, have struggled for their independence. This also applies to the European nations that struggled for their independence during the Nazi occupation.

Dr. al-Kasm asked: Wasn't there a resistance group in France opposed to the Nazis and supported by Britain and the United States? Is supporting resistance and freedom considered support for terrorism? He added: In Syria, there are about half a million Palestinian refugees who came here as a result of Israeli terrorism. No action is launched from our territory against others. We allow the Palestinian people to express their opinion through their democratic institutions, which have the right to speak, work, and struggle for the restoration of rights.

Answering a question about the campaign against some Arab states, Dr. al-Kasm said: If they could, they would make all Arab people terrorists. Of course, this is due to the influence of the Zionist lobby in the United States.

Answering another question on the killing of Americans in Lebanon, he said: Did the Lebanese go to America and kill them? He asked: Why did the United States withdraw from Lebanon then? Was it not because they felt that it was wrong and that they had no business on our territory. Who killed the Americans? It was someone whose father and brothers were killed and who found his enemy on his territory.

Dr. al-Kasm said Syria hopes that its relations with the United States will improve, noting the willingness to sit down with the Americans to define the concepts of terrorism and peace. He pointed out that U.S. officials had made some positive statements, but were forced to change these statements because of the pressure of the Zionist lobby.

Dr. al-Kasm expressed regret that the U.S. position has not changed. He said: The Americans still claim that Syria supports terrorism. Of course, this is not true. We have discussed this with them more than once. We asked them to present evidence of this.

Dr. al-Kasm said Syria will never support terrorism. He asked: What have the Western countries done to force Israel to implement the UN resolutions? The Security Council and the United Nations have issued hundreds of resolutions. Britain, the United States, and other countries have endorsed these resolutions. Despite this, Israel does not respect these resolutions. He added: They say Resolution 242 is ambiguous — despite the fact that it is very clear. Is Resolution 425 also ambiguous? Why does Israel not implement it? What have the Western countries done to force Israel to implement it?

Answering a question on the spread of the phenomenon of violence and terrorism in the United States, Dr. al-Kasm said: Violence in the United States is not new. It exists in all countries.

For his part, (David Katikatincheck), professor of political science at Aberdeen University, said in an interview with the same program that he supports Dr. al-Kasm's distinction between terrorism and national resistance. He added that what Dr. al-Kasm said is true and that there should be a distinction between terrorists and freedom fighters. This is a very important distinction because political leaders should define terrorism. He added that Syria is not accused of terrorism, pointing out that there are contradictory U.S. views toward this subject.

In conclusion, the professor told the program that Syria is a very important country in the region.

Syria: Israeli Decision on Settlement Building Rejected

JN0308080896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-THAWRAH stresses that the Israeli Government is blocking any progress in the regional peace process. The paper says: The Israeli Government, led by Binyamin Netanyahu, is deliberately seeking to foil the peace process, which strives to find a just and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH says: Since it came to power in Israel, Netanyahu's government has resorted to rejectionist and then deceptive methods to abort the efforts by the peace process cosponsors — particularly the United States, the EU, and France — to resume the peace process and advance it to its desired objective: the just and comprehensive peace that the Arabs, particularly Syria, are adhering to.

The paper adds: What confirms the fact that Israel is indeed serious about pursuing its measures and arrangements that seek to circumvent the principles and basic requirements of the peace process before it can torpedo this process is its insistence on annulling the restrictions placed by the former Israeli Government on the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As was demonstrated by the Israeli cabinet meeting yesterday, the Israeli Government did not spare any effort or maneuver to arrive at a position that would enable it to unanimously approve the annulment of the former government's decision to freeze settlement building.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The Israeli Government's annulment of the decision to freeze settlement building demonstrates that it is determined not to resume the peace process and that it seeks to abort it. The entire world community knows for certain that the annulment of the decision to freeze settlement building and the resumption of settlement activities with clear momentum will torpedo the efforts to resume the peace process and is considered a stumbling block that will prevent that process from progressing toward its established goal: the just and comprehensive peace.

Under the headline "Israel Gives Free Hand to Settlers and Settlement Activity," TISHRIN discusses the Israeli Government's decision aimed at expanding the existing Zionist settlements in the occupied Arab territories and building new Jewish settlements.

The paper says this step exposes the true face of Netanyahu's government and opens a real war against the peace process. Peace and settlement activities are contradictory things. When this government plans to build new settlements and expand existing ones, it simply means that the Israeli occupation troops intend to stay where they are. Also, doubling the number of settlers will reduce the number of Palestinians, the real owners of the land. The confiscation of land implies the expulsion of its owners who work it, the destruction of their homes, and forces them to join the hundreds of thousands of refugees who live in tents under miserable, tragic conditions.

TISHRIN adds that no one expects the new government to give any impetus to the peace process. The paper notes that experts and observers expect the peace process to come to a halt on all tracks.

TISHRIN also derides Netanyahu's statements on the peace process, in which he has only made threats.

TISHRIN calls for fortifying the Arab position and strengthening the joint Arab action. It also calls for reconsidering all previous Arab policies toward Israel and for abrogating everything that may harm the supreme Arab interests.

The paper also urges the Arabs to strengthen cooperation with the concerned states and groups to continue the peace process, particularly the EU, the United States, Russia, China, Japan, and the Nonaligned States.

TISHRIN concludes: Facing the new Israeli challenge is the responsibility of all Arabs who, at the Cairo summit, committed themselves to defending the Arab nation's interests. The Arabs can achieve a great deal by preserving their unity, by not allowing Israel to deceive them, and by adhering to the principles of the just and comprehensive peace that will return lands and rights, end occupation, and establish the authority of international law.

Syria: Al-Asad Meets Privately With Lebanon's al-Hirawi

JN0508115096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi at al-Rawdah Palace at 1200 [0900 GMT] today. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam attended the meeting. This meeting was followed by a private meeting between the two presidents.

Syria: Amman Reports al-Asad Talks With King Husayn on Peace, Ties

JN0308154796 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria held talks as soon as his majesty arrived in Damascus this morning. The talks focused on the Middle East peace process and ways to resume it in order to achieve a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

The talks also dealt with Middle East developments, Arab and regional issues of common interest, and relations between the two fraternal countries and ways to enhance them in all political and economic areas. [passage omitted]

Syria: Al-Asad Meets With Jordan's King Husayn

JN0308122896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, Jordanian monarch, arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Leading those who received him at the airport was President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted]

Af[illegible] his majesty the king shook hands with the deputy prime ministers, the ministers, and the Jordanian Embassy staff, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and His Majesty King Husayn left for the People's Palace in an official motorcade. [passage omitted]

His excellency the president and his majesty the king held a meeting at the People's Palace. The meeting was attended by Syrian Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'; Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman; Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Madani; and General Hikmat al-Shihabi, chief of Staff of the Army and Armed Forces. It was also attended by Jordanian Princes Hamzah Bin-al-Husayn and Hashim Bin-al-Husayn; Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti; 'Awn al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Court; Samir Qa'war, minister of water and irrigation, Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i al-Ka'abinah, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The expanded meeting was followed by a closed session between His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and His Majesty King Husayn.

Syria: Amman Radio Reports King Husayn's Arrival in Damascus

JN0308103396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] With God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn arrived in Damascus at noon [0900 GMT] today on a brief visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received at the airport by his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the deputy prime ministers, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', several ministers, senior Syrian civic and military officials, and Nasuh al-Majali, Jordan's ambassador in Damascus. [passage omitted]

Syria: Damascus Reports al-Asad-Husayn Talks, King's Departure

JN0308200596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 3 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, Jordanian monarch, arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. [passage omitted]

Following an expanded meeting, His Excellency President Hafiz al- Asad and His Majesty King Husayn held a closed meeting. Talks dealt with the Arab situation, developments that took place since the Cairo summit, regional developments, the peace process, and the state it is in due to Israel's negative positions and the obstacles placed by the Israeli Government hindering any progress in the peace process toward achieving the objective of a just and comprehensive peace.

The two sides discussed improving Arab relations to serve the Arab nation's causes, how best to implement the Cairo summit resolutions, as well as bilateral affairs. During the talks, his excellency the president hosted a luncheon banquet in honor of His Majesty King Husayn at the People's Palace, to which the Jordanian and Syrian delegations were invited.

His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal and his accompanying delegation left Damascus this evening. President Hafiz al-Asad led those who saw him off at the airport. [passage omitted]

Syria: Minister — Country 'Not in a Hurry' To Resume Peace Talks

JN0208195296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1815 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Latakia—Under the patronage of Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the eighth al-Mahabbah [affection] Festival, the al-Basil Festival, sponsored by the Ministry of Culture, was inaugurated at the al-Asad Sports City in Latakia at 1800 today. The festival functions will continue until 12 August. Minister of Culture Dr. Najah al-'Attar deputized for the prime minister on the occasion. [passage omitted]

The inauguration ceremony began by observing a one-minute silence in deference of the martyrs' souls and the soul of Staff Major Paratrooper Basil al-Asad. Minister of Culture Dr. Najah al-'Attar, who deputized for Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi on the occasion, delivered a speech at the inauguration ceremony. She relayed the greetings of the festival's patron and his wishes of success for all participants. The prime minister's care and concern, which were prompted by the noble directives of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, were instrumental in providing this festival with all factors of success, she added.

Dr. al-'Attar went on to say: We have called the al-Mahabbah Festival the al-Basil Festival to show loyalty to the one who demonstrated loyalty, to pay homage to the one who made sacrifices, and in recognition of the efforts of the person who laid foundation stones and departed.

Dr. al-'Attar asserted that Syria seeks a just peace. Its negotiating approach is based on this. Its negotiating policy is guided by principled constants from which it will never budge. It seeks a resumption of negotiations. Nonetheless, it is not in any hurry or rush in this regard. Most importantly, Syria is led by a leader known for his courage, shrewdness, and patience; and this allows the country to enjoy peace and trust that success will inevitably come, just as it trusts in God and in inevitable victory.

Dr. Najah al-'Attar added: Syria is strong thanks to its economy, and to its people who rally around their leadership and proceed behind it. Moreover, Syria's strength is derived from its geographic location and the food security it has achieved. Syria is the fulcrum that lends balance to Arab politics.

The culture minister said: Based on his awareness that Arab cooperation and an Arab pledge to engage in resistance will promote the overall Arab strength, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad made efforts with fraternal Arabs to bring about the convening of an Arab summit in Cairo, which marked a historic turning point that produced a closing of ranks, solidarity, and common views grounded in support of the land-for-peace formula. The Arabs have stood united in the face of an enemy whose policy has been based on dealing with the Arab states one at a time and pouncing on them one by one.

Dr. al-'Attar added: At present, Syria enjoys steady, durable, and firm stability that cannot be undermined by a tempest, evil pressure, or provocation, whatever its source. She hoped the eighth festival would be better than previous festivals. She explained that immense efforts were made toward that end. [passage omitted]

Syria: Commentary Rejects Israel's Lebanon First 'Conspiracy'

JN0208171396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1142 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Syria and Lebanon have just celebrated the anniversaries of their national armies. On the occasion, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad declared that Syria's pursuit of a just and comprehensive peace in the region must not be construed by anybody as a willingness to abandon territory. Syria cannot relinquish a single grain of its soil, nor any of its rights. Whoever seeks peace must first comply with the prerequisites of fairness and justice. Otherwise, he will be branded as an enemy of peace.

For his part, His Excellency President Ilyas al-Hirawi asserted that Lebanon can never conclude a separate deal with Israel, nor can it agree to be isolated from its Arab brethren. He added that Lebanon will retain its close links with Syria, continue to coordinate with it, and adhere to the relevant international legitimacy resolutions, particularly Resolution 425, which provides for the unconditional withdrawal of the invading Israeli troops from the occupied Lebanese territories.

It is obvious that the Israeli rulers, who are procrastinating over the resumption of peace talks based on the principles agreed upon for the Madrid conference, including the land-for-peace principle, aim to drive a wedge between Syria and Lebanon and separate the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, especially since joint coordination between the two countries proved its success over the past five years. It should be recalled that the Rabin-led Israeli Government made immense efforts and maneuvered to sow dissension between the two fraternal countries. However, all its attempts in this regard were to no avail. Consequently, the willpower of Syria and Lebanon emerged stronger and more determined than ever.

Now, the Netanyahu-led government is trying the same game once again. It has made public its opposition to withdrawal from the Golan. Meanwhile, it is speaking of a phased withdrawal from southern Lebanon involving a peace agreement and security arrangements. We are all well aware of the phases the Israeli rulers have in mind. For, they signed interim agreements with the Palestinian side, but failed to honor them. They interpreted these agreements at will, and deliberately and repeatedly humiliated Palestinian officials in flagrant violation of their pledges and obligations.

Since the floating of the conspiracy called the Lebanon first proposal, Lebanese officials have hastened to reiterate their nationalist stand, which stipulates that Lebanon will continue to pursue utmost cooperation with Syria as well as the quest for just and comprehensive peace. Israel will not be allowed to deal with Lebanon and Syria one at a time, for this would be detrimental to both countries, which stand in the same trench. Israel has only to implement Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

Failing this, there will be no peace in the region. It goes without saying that the Lebanese and Syrians have not forgotten the ordeals they have suffered as a result of the Israeli scheme, which aimed to divide Lebanon into rival sectarian entities, isolate it from its Arab environment, and demolish its economic and cultural role. The devastation Lebanon suffered as a result of the civil war nourished by Israel is still vivid in the Lebanese minds.

In his pan-Arab address to our Armed Forces, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad pointed out that Syria pursues a noble goal, which is the achievement of a peace that would return rights to their lawful owners and consecrate international legitimacy and international law. Likewise, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad indicated that Syria's championship and pursuit of peace is not a sign of weakness, for Syria is strong thanks to its valiant army and lofty people, the nation's support for its steadfastness, the brothers' coordination with it, and their support for its rights and demands. Syria cannot relinquish a single grain of soil nor a single right. Consequently, if it seeks peace, Israel has no choice but to effect a complete withdrawal from the Golan and the remaining occupied Arab territories.

Israel's attempts to sow dissension in Arab ranks and rupture Syrian-Lebanese coordination will be met with abysmal failure. The pursuit of these stupid policies by Israel will only feed Arab doubts about its expansionist plans. The Arabs today are united. Arab solidarity is expected to be further promoted and enhanced, and the Syrian-Lebanese cohesion is too immune to be penetrated by malicious Israeli maneuvers. This is because it is a natural response to the prerequisites of history, geography, and common destiny, which is baptized by the blood of both Syrians and Lebanese.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Mas'ud Accuses Islamabad of 'Meddling' in Afghan Affairs

BK0208124996 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 2 Aug 96 pp 1, 9

[Report by Rahimullah Yusufzai]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Peshawar — The top military commander of the Kabul regime, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, has again accused Pakistan of interfering in Afghanistan's affairs.

In an interview with Afghan journalist Babrak Ehsas, who works for Radio France International, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud said he wanted Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to order an end to interference in Afghanistan's affairs as a first step towards holding sincere talks with the Afghan government to resolve bilateral issues. "Pakistan has all along interfered in our internal affairs. It did so in the past and in doing the same now," he said.

Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's allegations came on the eve of a crucial visit by an Afghan government delegation to Pakistan. The visit, which was scheduled to begin today (Friday), has been postponed for a week due to unavoidable circumstances. Official sources told The News that the delegation would now arrive in Islamabad on August 10. They said the visit was postponed as meetings of the Afghan delegation with the president, prime minister and foreign and interior ministers couldn't be arranged during this period on account of non-availability of some of the Pakistani dignitaries.

The Afghan delegation would be led by interior minister Mohammad Yunus Qanuni, a close aide of the Kabul regime's most powerful military commander, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. Its other members are finance minister 'Abdol Hadi Arghandewal, who belongs to Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], deputy foreign minister 'Abdorrahim Ghafurzai, and minister of state for commerce 'Abdol Rahman [title as published].

The visit is primarily aimed at discussing Afghanistan's needs of food and other essential supplies from Pakistan. But deputy Afghan foreign minister 'Abdorrahim Ghafurzai in an interview with the same Afghan journalist said his delegation would also discuss problems between the two countries with their Pakistani hosts during the visit. "We are ready to provide all facilities to the Pakistan embassy to start functioning in Kabul again until we have repaired the damaged portions of their mission," he informed. Terming the incident of the attack on the Pakistan embassy as painful and bitter, he noted that it had damaged ties not only between the two countries but also among two nations.

Ghafurzai, who is reportedly favoured by Ahmad Shah Mas'ud to take over as full-fledged foreign minister compared with President Rabbani's nominee Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, said Kabul has no objection to Pakistan's role in rebuilding Afghanistan and would rather welcome their contribution in this task. "Pakistan's plans to build the road in western Afghanistan isn't a problem. Our only condition is that propaganda against us should be stopped so that the necessary trust and friendship is built between our two countries. We are ready to shake hands of friendship with Pakistan and will not give it any cause to complain," he added.

According to Ghafurzai, the decision by his government to raise the issue of Islamabad's alleged interference in Afghanistan's affairs in international forums wasn't intended to pursue enmity with Pakistan. "We only wanted to record these acts of interference and put pressure on Pakistan to hold bilateral talks with the Afghan government on all outstanding issues," he argued. He said Islamabad's invitation to Kabul to send its delegation to Pakistan was a positive outcome of his government's foreign policy.

Afghanistan: Taleban Delegation Meets Pakistani Interior Minister

LD0308205796 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto 0730 GMT 2 Aug 96 to Afghanistan

[FBIS Translated Text] A Taleban delegation has met General Nasrullah Babar, minister of internal affairs of Pakistan. The reports say that the Taleban delegation was headed by Mawlawi Abdol Jalil, a member of the high council of the group. The subject of discussion during the meeting is unknown.

A reason for the meeting could be that in a report Pakistani television referred to the delegation as a delegation from Afghanistan rather than one sent by the Taleban group. The television said that the purpose of the meeting was to thank the Pakistani Government for sending 2,500 pilgrims to Mecca from southern Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Premier Outlines Government Policy, Moves Against Taleban

LD0308201196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Stating the achievements of the Cabinet during a news conference, the prime minister of Afghanistan expressed satisfaction with solidarity between different government organs. BAKHTAR reported to us that Brother [Golboddin] Hekmatyar, the prime minister of the country, who was speaking with a group of journalists, said: To protect the value of the Afghan currency, the afghani, and to meet the primary needs of government employees, it has been decided that goods of primary necessity should be provided to government employees. It is also planned that government stores should be opened in all 16 wards of the city of Kabul at which goods should be offered at purchase price plus costs. Brother Hekmatyar added: Work has started on the resumption of electricity to Kabul, on repairing the Kabul-Jalalabad highway, and on repairing and making operational the Golbahar Textile and Jabalosaraj cement factories. Work on those projects will soon be completed.

He said that efforts are going on to reopen the Salang highway and to secure the support of other groups to [words indistinct] peace axis. Other groups have responded positively. A high-ranking delegation is planning to visit Pakistan in connection with improving relations with that country and in connection with the reopening of the Torkham supply route, as well as reducing prices of goods in Afghanistan.

The prime minister added: Despite propaganda by the infidels, the unity of opinion and action among officials of the Islamic state has further strengthened, and people's hopes about the future have been raised as well.

Answering a question about the security problems caused by the Taleban rocket attacks in the city of Kabul, the prime minister said that to remove the security problems in the city of Kabul and to prevent rocket attacks, the government has taken a series of measures. There is no reason for anyone to fight against the Islamic state. There is no cause for Taleban to fight the Islamic state and to expedite their gunmen to fight. Now in Paktia, Khost, Paktika, and the southwest zone of the country popular revolts have started. If the Taleban refuse to accept the realities and to present their demands through peaceful means, they will face many problems.

On the recent meeting of some Afghan parties in Tashkent, the prime minister said: The meeting [words indistinct] and is not affecting the peace-seeking efforts of the government in a negative way.

Afghanistan: Over 400,000 People Killed, Injured by Mines

LD0408194196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] More than 400,000 people have been killed or maimed by mines in Afghanistan. This point was made by Kefayatollah Eblagh, the head of the mine clearing agency, APP [expansion unknown], during an interview with a BAKHTAR correspondent.

He said: An area of more than 540 million square meters in Afghanistan consists of mine fields. Of this, 150 million square meters are farm land, houses, canals, pasture, and roads, which has affected the socioeconomic life of our nation. Mine clearing should be given priority in Afghanistan. He said that, according to a survey, between 5 and 10 million mines have been planted in 1,000 Afghan villages. [words indistinct].

So far 107,721 antitank, antipersonnel, and [word indistinct] mines have been detonated by his agency, and more than 41 million square meters of farm land has been cleared. It has also removed 30 million pieces of metal, which hinders mine clearing.

Afghanistan: Social Organizations Appeal Against Disbandment Decision

LD0408192496 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 4 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After an extraordinary meeting, the high council of social organizations has asked the government to review its policy on disbanding social organizations. BAKHTAR has reported that the request was made after a cabinet decision on disbanding all social organizations. The decision, however, has yet to be finalized. The organizations consider that their activities are in line with national and international laws.

Under the current circumstances in the country and the requirements of the reconstruction of the country, they think that disbanding them is an unnecessary act. Therefore, they demanded to continue their activities.

India

India: Gujral Expresses Determination To Retain Nuclear Option

BK0208125796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has declared that it will not dilute its stand on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, CTBT. There is no question of softening its position; nor can it permit any language in the draft treaty imposing any obligation on New Delhi, directly or indirectly. Voicing the government's determination to retain its nuclear option, the external affairs minister told both the houses of parliament today that this is essential in view of the open and clandestine efforts being made by neighboring countries to acquire nuclear weapons.

Mr. Gujral said it is incorrect to blame India for holding back the progress of the treaty, as he has already made New Delhi's position clear to the U.S. secretary of state during their meeting at Jakarta. Members in both the houses fully endorsed the government's stand on the issue and said the nation is prepared to face any eventuality that might arise out of its position.

India: Report Says CTBT Stand Causes 'Fissures' in West

BK0208160396 Bangalore DECCAN HERALD in English 2 Aug 96

[Report by K. Subramanya—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, August 1 — A last ditch diplomatic ploy to impose the unacceptable draft of the proposed Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] on India has backfired on its authors. Just before the resumption of talks at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament [CD] on Monday [29 July], India spelled out its intentions to stand firm on its decision not to subscribe to the draft in its existing form. The Indian opposition emanates from the CD silence on the goal of global nuclear disarmament demonstrated in its reluctance to address the nuclear weapon stockpile of the five nuclear powers.

New Delhi has underlined that without a commitment by the nuclear powers to the goal of nuclear disarmament, India cannot give up its nuclear option and compromise on its future national security interests. Under the revised US-European Union authored Entry-into-Force clause, 44 of the 61 members of the CD must sign and ratify the treaty for it to come into force. Among the 44 countries are the five nuclear powers and the three nuclear threshold countries — India, Pakistan and Israel.

In view of this, India can no longer protect its national security interests by a mere announcement not to subscribe to the draft as it did on June 20. Nor is the walk-out option intelligible. For, in both the cases it leaves it open for others in the CD to adopt the draft CTBT. In such an event, India will have to sign and ratify the treaty within three years for it to come into force. Should India not sign and ratify the test ban treaty, it faces the threat of sanctions. The entry-into-force provision envisages a conference of states which have already signed and ratified the treaty to take appropriate measures to make CTBT operational as early as possible. Hence, India has come to the conclusion that the only effective option to avoid the draft it does not agree with is to block its passage in Geneva itself, lest the matter became more complicated if the treaty is allowed to reach New York for signing by member states at the next United States General Assembly session in September.

However, New Delhi has given advance notice of its intentions to the CD negotiators at the very beginning of the present round of negotiations. This is a deliberate step in several crucial ways. First, it is a flexible negotiating stance. New Delhi would like to still make it clear to others that India would not come in the way if others sign a CTBT leaving it alone. However, if India's participation is considered essential, the notice gives a last minute opportunity to others to address the stated concerns of India. To this effect India has already circulated an amendment to the Entry-into-Force clause which states that "notwithstanding anything contained in this Article (i.e, Entry-into-Force), this treaty shall enter into force only after all states parties have committed themselves to the attainment of the goal of total elimination of all nuclear weapons within a well-defined timeframe (of ten years)."

If the two courses are not considered by the CD, the message is clear that there will be no treaty at all as India will block the draft treaty's passage in Geneva. Second, it is a clear message to the major players in the negotiations like the United States that New Delhi will not go by any informal verbal assurances based on which India should allow the passage of the draft treaty in Geneva before the scheduled close of CD negotiations on August 12. The Indian ambassador to the negotiations, Ms Arundhati Ghose, has already underlined this when she told her counterparts from other states that "there is no question of signing the treaty unless its (India's) concerns are taken on-board."

Finally, a key consideration behind the advance notice is to erase the impression being sought to be created by the nuclear powers that an "isolated" India is playing a "spoiler" role in the efforts of the CD to conclude a CTBT and expose the cracks among themselves. Although India has made its opposition to the draft CTBT open, the consensus among the nuclear powers is very fragile. While India opposed the draft due to the lack of a clear linkage between the test ban goal and the larger nuclear disarmament goal, Russia and China are far from convinced about the draft treaty's clause regarding on-site monitoring of the test ban through national technical means (NTM).

Introduced at the US instance, this will allow US spy satellites to have an eye on their nuclear installations.

Russia and China have expressed reservations about the provisions. They also suspect that the draft treaty, which bans nuclear test explosion at test centers and leaves scope for laboratory tests through simulation technology to refine nuclear weapon technology, will give unilateral advantage to the US. Even so, they have not come in the open with their objections to the draft treaty. True, these countries have reportedly adopted the bilateral path to sort out their differences with the US. One important reason why they did not have to express their views at the negotiating table is that there was no need for it as long as India registered its objections.

Of course, there is also an additional reason for this. All of them are also united in their desire to bring India, Pakistan and Israel within the purview of a CTBT. But with India's firm opposition, the US is at least keen on the treaty to achieve its minimum objective of binding its Russian and Chinese traditional rivals to the draft CTBT which would give them an edge in the nuclear field. This is the reason why the US has informally suggested to India to allow the treaty through the Geneva talks. An Indian blockade will deny this advantage to the US vis-a-vis Russia and China. In the face of the threat by New Delhi, there are indications that the US may be ready to amend the draft to leave out India. However, Russia and China which have actually been "hiding behind India's skirts," have opposed any amendments to the draft. In other words, it is not just India that does not want the kind of treaty envisaged now. China and Russia, too, entertain suspicions about it. As is well known, Pakistan is also taking the Indian shelter to protect its clandestine nuclear program from the CTBT ambit. The list is longer as the UK, too, has also its own reasons to be a reluctant participant. The Indian stand is likely to expose the fissures among the five nuclear powers as negotiations progress in Geneva.

India: Gowda Issues 'Veiled Warning' to U.S. Over Kashmir

BK0408114596 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 3 Aug 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Aug 2 — In a veiled warning to the United States Government, Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda declared in Parliament today that India would not allow foreign powers to "play their politics of suppression (in Jammu and Kashmir) and indirectly help our secret enemies".

Gowda's assertion followed the unveiling of a new economic package for the State. The package was announced just ahead of the notification for Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The Election Commission said today that the four-phased polls will be notified on Wednesday [7 July].

The package has written off loans of thousands of small-scale industrialists, sanctioned more money for migrant camps and given the State Rs [rupees] 352 crore as Special Central Plan Assistance to balance its budget.

Referring to the recent visit of US Ambassador Frank Wisner to Kashmir, Gowda said in Rajya Sabha that whatever may be the international community's opinion of the political situation in the country, "they must know that whenever a situation has arisen, we have acted as one man, one soul, to fight the foreign powers".

Gowda said he was aware of the designs of India's enemies to scuttle the Assembly polls in the State by creating an atmosphere of fear and terror. "We will not allow our secret enemies to play their heinous act. We will see that elections are held and there is maximum turnout," he emphasised.

Gowda reiterated his promise of "maximum autonomy" for the State. In his statements in both Houses of Parliament, he said the Centre would hold consultations with the elected government in Jammu and Kashmir to reach a consensus on the autonomy issue.

"While doing this, we will also ensure that the aspirations of all regions in the State, namely Ladakh, Kashmir Valley and Jammu, are taken into account," he said.

In order to address the apprehensions expressed in the Rajya Sabha, Gowda said that discussing "maximum autonomy" with the elected legislators did not mean that any resolution passed by the State Assembly would be "blindly" accepted by the Centre.

"We will take a decision which will not damage the unity of the country," he stressed.

The Prime Minister insisted that the package announced by the Government was not an attempt to influence the voters but was aimed at helping "the suffering masses" in Kashmir especially the Hindu minorities like the Pandits who have been at the receiving end.

This is the second economic "package" for the State. On July 23, Gowda had announced measures to speed up the development of infrastructure in the State.

Interestingly, Gowda singled out tourism among the economic activities the Government wanted to see being revived in the State. The emphasis on tourism comes in the wake of the controversial remark by Home Minister Indrajit Gupta in the Lok Sabha that tourists should avoid the Valley.

Gowda's statement also tried to strike a balance among the regions in the State, to blunt the charge that the Valley was being favoured.

Jammu city has been upgraded to B-2 status with the Centre recognising that its population has crossed the four-lakh mark. Rs 2.40 crore will be allocated for a conference centre at Leh. The Centre will also subsidise a weekly helicopter service — in place of the fortnightly flights — till the ongoing Rs 25-crore airport project is completed.

Additional Rs 6.6 crore will be given to the State this year to improve facilities in 13 migrant camps in Jammu. The amount will go towards building more tenements and schools and improving sanitation.

The centrepiece of the package, however, is the loan waiver. Gowda said tourist arrivals in the State had become a trickle from a peak of seven lakhs in 1986-87 and that the livelihood of thousands of families had been affected.

Individuals and units had fallen into a debt trap and could not repay the loans, he said. The State Government had identified 31,000 borrowers from sectors like small-scale industry, trade, transport, hotels and the houseboat business, who had taken loans amounting to Rs 181.87 crore. They owed another Rs 21.79 crore as interest.

Gowda said the Government proposed to write off the loans and interest of those who had borrowed up to Rs 50,000. An inter-ministerial committee is being set up to provide some relief to those who had borrowed bigger amounts.

The state will get a helping hand to bridge the resource gap. Its plan outlay for 1996-97 has been fixed at Rs 1050 crore. But even with Central assistance at last year's level, the State in this budget shows a deficit of Rs 352 on the current account.

The State will now get a Special Central Plan Assistance of this amount.

India: Delhi Reverses Decision on U.S. Senator's Kashmir Visit

BK0308161196 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 3 Aug 96 p 7

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reversing its earlier decision not to allow US Senator Hank Brown to visit Kashmir, the government today relented and decided to allow him to visit the troubled state.

Though the Republican Senator will be here on an official visit, his trip to Kashmir will be a private one, informed sources said. However, the government will extend security coverage and facilitate meetings with state officials while he is in Kashmir.

A report from Washington on Wednesday [31 July] said the Government of India had turned down Brown's request to visit Kashmir.

The move to permit Brown, a staunch India-baiter in the Senate and in the Senate Near-Eastern and South Asian Affairs Sub-committee of which he is the Chairman, appears to be part of the strategy of openness embarked upon by the government to show that the situation in Kashmir has improved vastly.

"We believe that nothing can be more convincing than to let foreign opinion-makers visit Kashmir and see the situation on the ground for themselves," said an MEA [Ministry of External Affairs] official.

The Colorado Senator, known in India for his sponsorship of the Brown Amendment, had sought permission to visit Kashmir during a two-day visit to India.

Brown will also be meeting External Affairs Minister I K Gujral on Sunday [4 July] when a wide range of issues are expected to come up for discussion, the sources said. Apart from certain obvious subjects like, Kashmir and India's position on nuclear issues, other bilateral matters would also figure in the discussions.

Despite criticism about allowing American diplomats and congressmen into the sensitive state of Kashmir, the government is going ahead with its transparency strategy.

The success in holding Lok Sabha elections in the state and the fair prospects of holding Assembly polls later this year are being viewed by the government as indications that it is over the hump in Kashmir.

The Brown Amendment, passed by the US Senate in September last year, cleared a $368 million package of sophisticated US military equipment for Pakistan by waiving the Pressler Law in a one-time arrangement.

From India, Brown will be heading for Pakistan and from there to Afghanistan. Brown has evinced a keen interest in events in Afghanistan.

India: PTV Cites Kashmiri Leader's Remarks on Wisner Meeting

BK0408134396 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A prominent Kashmiri leader, Syed Shabir Shah, held a meeting with the American ambassador in India, Mr. Frank Wisner, and briefed him about the overall prevailing situation in the occupied territory.

In an interview with PTV special correspondent Ghulam Nabi Khayal, Syed Shabir Shah said he has told the American envoy solution of the Kashmir issue lies in giving the right of self-determination to the Kashmiris. He reminded him the holding of elections will be an exercise in futility. Mr. Wisner is currently on a tour of the occupied state.

Syed Shabir also informed the American ambassador the Kashmiri leaders are willing to open a dialogue with the Indian Government, but he maintained the atrocities perpetrated by occupation forces in the territory must be stopped.

In response to a question from PTV correspondent, he said the leaders of All Parties Hurriyat Conference would continue to mobilize the people to fight for their right of self-determination and there could be no compromise on this issue.

India: Pakistan Producing Stinger Missiles; Terror Plans

BK0508054696 Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi 4 Aug 96 p 1, 12

[Report by O.P. Pandit]

[FBIS Translated Text] New Delhi 27 July — Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence is sending large amounts of RDX and refined explosives to disturb peace in Indian states. A report prepared by the U.S. Republican Party about two years ago had clearly stated that Pakistan was busy accumulating large quantities of weapons and explosives in various parts of India. According to reports received here, Pakistanis have set up many units to produce small arms along the Pakistan-Afghan border where AK-47 rifles — more powerful version of AK rifles — and Stinger missiles are also being produced. In the first week of March this year, Nepalese police seized 32 AK-47 rifles in the Nepalese town of Mahendranagar which were to be smuggled into India. The reports received by the Home Ministry from Punjab said 26 terrorists were arrested with 38 kg of RDX explosives and other lethal weapons in March this year from the villages in Ropar, Ludhiana, Amritsar and Jagraon districts. Some people have also been arrested with RDX explosives in Meghalaya.

After targeting Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan is now bent upon creating terror in many other cities of India by sending large amount of arms there. The Home Ministry has responded by asking all state governments to strengthen their intelligence bureaus. The central government has especially been instructed to intensify patrolling along the India-Nepal border and the Pakistani border with Rajasthan and Punjab as well as in border areas of Gujarat. The Indian Government fears that Pakistan intends to set off a series of explosions in many places before or on Indian Independence Day on 15 August. Patrols along the Rajasthan's border with Pakistan has been intensified. All villages in the adjoining area have been under strict supervision in the last few days. The Home Ministry apprehends that Pakistani agents will try to mislead or lure people living there into transporting weapons and explosives to forward areas. The most shocking revelation is that Pakistani agents have also started their activities as far as in Madhya Pradesh. Consignments of AK-47 rifles and other weapons have also been recovered from some wells and other areas in Indore and Ujjain towns of the state. Most of the weapons are reported to be made in China.

The Home Ministry has directed that fencing work along the India-Pakistan border be sped up. Fencing work along the Kashmir border has also been continuing despite Pakistan shelling, though slowly. The cell set up in the Home Ministry to monitor Pakistan's activities is in touch with the intelligence bureaus of all states. The Border Security Force has been equipped with powerful wireless sets to facilitate the exchange of information. In view of the state assembly elections in Kashmir, additional security forces have been deployed and intelligence system strengthened. Important information has been gathered during the interrogation of Pakistani terrorists arrested in New Delhi recently. This information suggests that Pakistan is planning a large-scale infiltrations of its agents into India through disturbed areas on the border.

India: Deve Gowda Orders Probe Into Charges of Telephone Tapping

BK0508100296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 5 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has asked the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] to conduct an impartial inquiry into the allegations of telephone tapping. In a letter to the CBI director, Mr. Joginder Singh, Mr. Deve Gowda said he had never issued any instructions regarding telephone tapping at any point of time against any political leader in the country. He said he is taking this step to ask the CBI to find out the truth to clear any possible doubt on the issue. Mr. Deve Gowda said the inquiry will not only cover the period since his assuming charge of the office of the prime minister, but also his 18-month tenure as chief minister of Karnataka. He further directed that the inquiry report on both these issues be furnished within a month.

India: Government Denies Tapping Telephones of Political Leaders

BK0408132196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has denied that its agencies were tapping the telephones of some political leaders. The union home secretary, Mr. K. Padmanabhaiah, in a press statement today described such reports in a section of the press as total fabrication. He said there is no element of truth in the press reports and described them as mischievous and motivated.

Iran

Iran: Representative at UN Says Latest U.S. Propaganda 'Unwise'

LD0308185996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] Kamal Kharrazi, Iran's permanent representative at the UN, has described the latest wave of propaganda by American media and leaders against the Islamic Republic of Iran as unwise, and a clumsy effort to politically exploit the existing atmosphere in American society. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] We have an interview on this issue with Mr. Kharrazi, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran's permanent mission at the UN.

Mr. Kharrazi, American officials, including that country's defense secretary [William Perry], have implicated Iran in the Dhahran, Saudi Arabian bomb incident. What are your views about this and the views of the permanent mission at the UN ?

[Kharrazi] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The permanent UN mission has issued a statement rejecting any involvement in that incident. One has to see why they are making these allegations. In the first place, it covers their own weak points; their actions have been questioned in America and in the world, and in order to cover these weak points, they are evidently using the old tactic of implicating an outside element. It is obviously an internal matter — the Saudi Arabian issue — and cannot be linked to outsiders, including Iran.

Apart from this, what is going on inside America is also relevant considering that it is election year there and there is rivalry between the Republicans and Democrats. Evidently, they need to exploit people's emotions for their own interests and believe that under current circumstances, and under circumstances when they want to put through the bill on terrorism here, and when Clinton is due to sign the bill on sanctions against Iran, they need to raise these issues.

[Correspondent] Mr. Kharrazi, do you think that these propaganda efforts reflect America's failure to convince its allies to tighten sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran?

[Kharrazi] Yes, this is correct. Because America has failed to drag Europe into taking part in sanctions against Iran, it wants to do something to involve them in practice in this scenario. Thus, creating this adverse propaganda climate, and bringing pressure to bear and whatever it wants to carry through bills, are efforts to involve the Europeans, in practice, in sanctions against Iran and in confronting Iran.

[Correspondent] Thank you for taking part in this interview.

Iran: Dailies Lambaste U.S. 'Anti-Iran Campaign'

LD0408124596 Tehran IRNA in English 0748 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Aug 4 (IRNA) — Two English-language dailies Sunday [4 August] lashed out at the recent wave of U.S. anti-Iran campaign with 'TEHRAN TIMES' urging the foreign ministry not to sit idly by and 'IRAN NEWS' asking Washington to present documentation in support of its accusations.

'TEHRAN TIMES' said that Washington has launched the new wave of propaganda campaign against Iran due to the crushing rebuffs it received from EU members and other countries in its anti-Iran campaign.

"Under the influence of the strong Zionist lobbys both Republicans and Democrats have seized on the Iranian card in last minute hopes to influence the results of the coming elections" said the editorial.

Stressing that the U.S. allegations that Iran sponsors terrorism is no longer new, it said, everybody knows that Iran has always been a scapegoat and convenient target.

The paper criticized that although the U.S. disinformation campaign is one-sided because of the control Washington exerts over world media networks, it seems that the Iranian foreign policy-makers remain coy in this regard.

Urging the Foreign Ministry to act now, it referred to the U.S. politicians openly speaking of a military attack on Iran and regarded a national duty for the Iranian Foreign Ministry to lodge a complaint against the U.S. with the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

"This will prevent U.S. rumor-mongering and prepare the world to beware of U.S. lies, particularly its desire to see the world under its feet."

The Foreign Ministry should take the initiative of asking for a special session of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) on terrorism to redefine the concept of terrorism .

"The charge of terrorism should not be linked forever with Iran, Libya, North Korea or Sudan," it said adding, the last step would be for Tehran to take up the matter with the UN for implementation."

"Iran should not just sit and listen to the monotonous accusations of being a terrorist countrys" said the editorial, adding, "it must act now "

Another morning daily 'IRAN NEWS' brushed aside the repeated allegations levelled by the U.S. against Iran.

On charges that Iran is operating terrorist camps, it reminded that Iran is an open country and based on authentic and accurate information no such camps exist in Iran.

The paper urged Washington to present documentations in support of its allegations.

Acknowledging that with regards to the American military adventurism, this will not be the first and of course the last U.S. anti-Iran move, the paper referred to the 1980-1988 Iraqi imposed war against Iran, saying, no one knows better than the United States the might of the Islamic combatants.

If they have forgotten, we would like to remind them that each and every Iranian knows how to defend every inch of his or her motherlands" it concluded.

Iran: UK Article Examines Possible Targets of U.S. Strike

LD0408122296 London THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH in English 4 Aug 96 p 20

[Article by Con Coughlin, "chief foreign correspondent": "Tempting Array of Strike Targets for Pentagon"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There will be no shortage of targets if the United States goes ahead with its plans to retaliate against Iran for continuing to support international terrorist organisations.

As THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH exclusively revealed four weeks ago, Iran has set up an extensive network of training camps used to train terrorists for operations around the world.

The Iranian embassy in London reacted to the revelations by writing a lengthy letter denouncing the information as "fantasy". But classified US intelligence documents published at the end of last week confirm the details published by THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH.

Apart from setting up 11 training camps for terrorist groups around the globe, the Iranians also provide practical and financial support to two dissident Saudi groups — the Organisation of Islamic Revolution and Hizbollah of the Hejaz.

Both groups — linked to Saudi terrorist Osama bin-Laden, the Afghan veteran who has threatened to wage an international terrorist war against the US — have been linked to June's lorry bomb against the American military base at Dhahran.

Members of the two groups have been trained at the Imam Ali camp on Tehran's outskirts, one of the ayatollahs' main terrorist-training bases.

A former military barracks, run by the foreign affairs ministry, this is the largest of the 11 camps. Intelligence experts believe many of Iran's overseas terrorist attacks are planned there.

Three training camps are located in the Iranian capital, which is also the headquarters of Iran's official nuclear research programme, making Tehran a tempting target for the American Navy's Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Alternatively, the US might choose to eradicate all the terrorist training camps through which an estimated 5,000 volunteers pass each year. The largest outside Tehran is the Abyek Camp at Qasvim, which has all the appearances of a small provincial town but is in fact a terrorist finishing school.

The camp provides training in terrorist assassinations, and the bodies of executed criminals are used for target practice. This camp, along with the others, has been used by terrorists from as far afield as Libya, Lebanon and Sudan.

Another target could be Iran's extensive network of bases containing weapons of mass destruction. Both the Americans and Israelis have expressed deep concern about Iran's attempts to build up its chemical weapons arsenal and develop its nuclear capability.

Even though Iran has developed a formidable stockpile of chemical weapons, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has ordered the Supreme Security Council — the main body overseeing the ayatollahs' military and intelligence network — to intensify its efforts to acquire new technology, increasing the government's destructive capability.

The Iranians are keen to procure chemical weapons for use as warheads on the long-range ballistic missiles recently bought from China.

The Iranian government is committed to developing its own nuclear arms capability and specialists believe Tehran could have its own nuclear weapons within five years.

The Clinton administration was embroiled in a diplomatic row with Moscow last year after THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH revealed that the Russians had agreed to sell Iran two 440-megawatt nuclear reactors.

Although International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors regularly visit Iran, they have been admitted only to official nuclear research establishments which the Iranians claim are used for peaceful purposes. They include two nuclear reactors at the Gulf port of Bushire, which were built by the Germans in the 1970s and are now being renovated by Russian technicians.

The Iranians have also developed top-secret nuclear installations to which the inspectors have not been granted access.

The largest, Isfahan, has been built underground to protect it from attack. Another is at Neka, near the Caspian Sea, while the Revolutionary Guards have their own nuclear facility at Darkhovin.

The Israeli government considered conducting preemptive air raids against these centres earlier this year after Iran had been implicated in the planning of suicide bombings that devastated Jerusalem and Tel Aviv last spring, but Washington dissuaded it from acting, for fear that a strike would damage the peace process.

Now, with the American presidential election only three months away, Iran undoubtedly provides a tempting target for President Clinton, as the American public reels in shock from the TWA crash and the Atlanta bombing.

US officials say they have already briefed British and French counterparts about their intentions. If the Americans do decide to act against Iran, they will want to feel confident of their Western allies' full support.

Iran: UK Article Views Tehran's 'Ugly New Campaign' Against U.S.

LD0408124696 London THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH in English 4 Aug 96 p 20

[Article by Ambrose Evans-Pritchard in Washington: "Mullahs' Zealotry Spreads to America's Heart"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran has embarked on the most far-reaching campaign of state-sponsored terrorism ever conducted against the United States, threatening US airliners, public buildings with a wave of destructive attacks.

US officials are convinced that the clerical regime in Tehran has made a strategic decision to escalate its permanent war against the "Great Satan", striking US targets on American soil for the first time in a systematic way.

Although it is too early to conclude that the crash of TWA Flight 800 off the coast of New York was caused by sabotage, the view in Washington is that it was almost certainly a bomb.

Coming just weeks after the Iranian-backed bombing of the US barracks in Dhahran, which killed 19 American servicemen, it is now widely suspected that the TWA tragedy is part of Iran's ugly new campaign.

"This is just the beginning," said Kenneth Timmerman, publisher of the Iran Brief [title in italics] in Washington. "More aircraft are going to fall out of the sky."

In the past, Iran has used its extensive network of KGB-trained agents and surrogate groups in the United States for limited purposes, confining itself to the murder of Iranian exiles. "For 10 years, the attacks against Americans always took place outside the US — either in Europe or in the Middle East. Now it's moving here," said Daniel Pipes, author of a book on the Iranian terror machine.

He argued that the mullahs were enraged when the speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, threw down the gauntlet last December, after calling Iran "a permanent, long-term threat to civilised life on this planet." Gingrich pushed through legislation forcing the CIA to spend $20 million on a covert operation targeting the Iranian government. Tehran retaliated immediately, announcing that it would match the funding dollar for dollar with its own undercover operation against Washington.

But the White House has been no slouch either in castigating Iran. Alarmed by the regime's fast-track programme to build nuclear weapons, the Clinton administration imposed a ban in May 1995 on all US trade with Iran. Since then, it has been in a bidding war with Republicans in Congress, who have been pushing increasingly tougher measures.

Little by little, the noose has been tightened. In June this year, Washington imposed a "secondary boycott": French, German or other companies that do business with Iran will now be banned from the US market.

US intelligence sources believe that Iran's president, Hashemi-Rafsanjani, made his strategic decision at the beginning of this year to strike on American soil. It was driven in part by changes in the domestic politics of Iran, notably the rise of Ayatollah Ahmed Jannati, leader of a "Brown Shirt"-style street militia, who has been demanding all-out war against the US. It may also have been prompted by a perception that the Clinton administration, for all its tough talk, lacked the will to deploy strong military force.

"Until 1993, the Iranians believed that the US would strike back with extreme violence if they were ever caught killing Americans," said Timmerman. "They remembered what happened under Ronald Reagan when US special forces went in and destroyed a third of the Iranian navy [in 1988]. But they look at Clinton and they see a man who doesn't understand power diplomacy. They think he'll fall back on meaningless multilateralism."

But the former chief of counter-terrorism in the FBI, Oliver "Buck" Revell, warns that the Iranians are making a colossal miscalculation if they think Clinton will shrink from action. "I can assure you the retaliation will be devastating. If they are behind these bombings, they will be very sorry that they ever did this," he said.

Iran is detested by the American people, who would like nothing more than to see a military strike that smashed the regime. Feelings are not that different in policy-making circles in Washington. Even the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, a deal-maker known for his lawyerly caution, is an ultra-hawk when it comes to Iran. He accuses it of being an "outlaw state" employing systematic terror as an instrument of national policy.

Christopher learned the hard way that patience and moderation are wasted on the mullahs. In 1980, as deputy secretary of state, he was in charge of negotiating the end to the American embassy hostage crisis, a humiliating ordeal that almost finished his political career. Sixteen years later, the Iranians are once again threatening to spoil his contribution to history, this time working to undermine the Middle East peace process.

Rumours are flying that the 101st Airborne and other elite American military units are being shipped to the Gulf in preparation for an assault. But it seems inconceivable that Clinton would risk US casualties, not to mention hostages, by deploying ground troops against Iran.

With the presidential election only three months away, any strike is likely to come from aircraft flown at high altitude and missile launches from American warships.

The curse of Iran destroyed the presidency of Jimmy Carter, and came close to bringing down Ronald Reagan in the arms-for-hostages scandal.

Bill Clinton has already burned his fingers once by allowing Iran to gain a foothold in Bosnia, a costly lesson that has been well-studied at the White House. Henceforth, US policy will consist of bombs, bombs, and more bombs, all delivered from a safe distance.

Iran: Radio Commentary on U.S. Actions in Saudi Arabia Following Bombing

LD0408122096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian
0949 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] America's decision to redeploy its forces in Saudi Arabia and recall the forces' families from that country demonstrates the U.S. authorities' concern about possible further explosions. Observers believe the Riyadh and Dhahran explosions to be the manifestation of the widespread opposition by internal Saudi Arabian groups which object to the presence of foreign forces in their country.

The Saudi authorities arrested the culprit in the Riyadh explosion and executed him. They have announced the arrest of those responsible for the Dhahran explosion. The Saudi officials have not established any connection between those arrested and the neighboring countries. Nevertheless, U.S. officials, in order to justify the presence of their forces in the region, pointed the finger of accusation towards Iran after each of these explosions. In the past few days, the U.S. war secretary, announcing the redeployment of U.S. forces, once again raised the allegations regarding Iran's support for terrorist groups. Although this U.S. official retracted his words two days later and took back those allegations, by his earlier statements he tried to stoke the propaganda climate against the Islamic Republic of Iran inside and outside America and incite public opinion against Iran.

Political experts believe that the measures taken by U.S. officials are aimed at paving the way for the acceptance of American forces in the region, on the one hand, and on the other hand are efforts in response to internal criticisms which are levelled at U.S. foreign policies. On the threshold of U.S. elections, the repatriation of the bodies of 19 Americans has greatly strengthened the position of those who oppose U.S. foreign policies and intensified criticism of those policies. All this has caused U.S. policies to resort to the worn-out weapon of raising allegations of support for terrorism in order to stoke the anti-Iranian propaganda and thus pave the way for the acceptance of anti-Iranian plans inside America.

U.S. hostility towards Iran began after the success of the Islamic revolution and the ending of the arrogant dominance over Iran by the White House. After the establishment of the Islamic ruling system, Iran has always played its role on the international scene and at regional level as an independent player. That is why the ending of the era of U.S. dominance over Iran brought to an end the era of the plunder of Iran's resources, and also brought about the possibility for many countries to defend their interests against America by emulating and supporting Iran's policies.

That situation provoked America's hostility and enmity towards Iran and resulted in the White House resorting to any means to inflict blows against the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, as the press statement by the office of Iran's UN envoy expresses, Iran's power stems from its unshakable commitment to rejecting hegemony and submission and cannot be overcome by false and slanderous propaganda.

Iran: Iranian Kurds Agree To Stop Cross-Border Attacks

NC0408140196 Paris AFP in English
1357 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dubayy, Aug 4 (AFP) — The DPIK Iranian Kurdish rebel group will stop armed attacks on Iranian territory from their bases in Iraqi Kurdistan, the Iraqi Kurdish group PUK said on Sunday [4 August].

A statement received in Dubayy from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which controls northeast Iraq, said it had reached agreement with the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (DPIK) to stop cross-border raids.

It said the agreement was forged "following a series of meetings between the leaderships of the PUK and the DPIK to discuss implications of the recent Iranian military incursion into Iraqi Kurdistan."

Some 2,000 Iranian troops crossed into northern Iraq and attacked a DPIK camp last week at Koi Sanjaq, 50 kilometres (30 miles) from the Iran-Iraq border, the DPIK said.

Tehran justified its incursion in a letter to UN Secretary General Butros Butros-Ghali by invoking its "right to self-defence" against cross-border raids by the DPIK.

The PUK statement said the DPIK "will be assured freedom of political and organisational activities in Iraqi Kurdistan," adding that the PUK "will accord the DPIK with the required facilities to ensure the security and livelihood of its members."

The PUK said it hoped the agreements will "assure Iran's security concerns" and that it would "mitigate justification for future Iranian incursions into Iraqi Kurdistan."

There are two million Kurds in Iran, and around 25 million Kurds in total within an area that encompasses Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria.

In Iraq, Turkey and Iran, armed Kurdish groups are fighting for autonomy, and the DPIK spearheads Kurdish resistance to Tehran.

Northern Iraq has defied Baghdad's control since the end of the Gulf War in 1991 and is controlled by two rival Iraqi Kurdish factions, the PUK led by Jalal Talabani and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of Mas'ud Barzani.

Iran: Tripartite Meeting Called For on Situation in North Iraq

LD0308101896 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English
30 Jul 96 p 2, 13

[Unattributed article: "Call Tripartite Meeting on Menace in Northern Iraq"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] From the very first day of the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 Iran tried to keep its borders safe and peaceful following a policy of coexistence.

Certain vested interest, in the meantime, tried to undermine the Islamic Republic's sincere and noble efforts in maintaining peace on its borders. Left with no choice, Tehran had to reluctantly punish the culprits.

The same happened on Sunday [28 July] when Iranian forces shelled a grouplet inside Kurdish-controlled Northern Iraq causing some casualties.

Iraqi Kurds, however, claimed that the Iranian forces 'crossed the border and attacked the bases' of the misguided grouplet.

Such unwanted incidents began to occur after the birth of the Islamic Republic in 1979 which cut off the hands of the oppressors from Iran.

It was but natural that the oppressive powers launch proxy wars against Iran and try to damage her territorial integrity.

The same powers, in order to achieve their unholy goals, have tried to inject new life into the carcass of grouplets such as the Kurdish Democratic party [KDP] and Komaleh.

The KDP and Maoist Komaleh are the groups whose members during the 1980-88 Iraqi imposed war, remained at the disposal of the enemies of Iran and worked as spies for the Iraqi regime. These mercenaries also worked as saboteurs against the Islamic Republic on the clear instructions of their foreign masters.

The war ended and the activities of these grouplets were ceased. But during the last few months they resumed their services to the enemies of the Islamic Republic and are again busy with anti-Iran activities.

These activities are limited to robbery, extortion and planting explosives to terrorize civilians living near the Irano-Iraqi border.

The reaction of the Iranian forces on Sunday was a natural response to the atrocious actions of these grouplets during the last few months.

This Iranian reaction is also justified in the light of the fact that these terrorists received a green light for their anti-Iran activities from certain Western countries who are present in the Iraqi Kurdistan.

Few legitimate points should also be taken into consideration before reaching a conclusion about these unwanted developments.

Since the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Iraq's central government in Baghdad has no control over its Kurdish-populated Northern territories. This means that no legitimate government is responsible for what is going on in that strategically important area.

As far as Iran is concerned, its Constitution has endowed all basic rights to the minorities including the Kurdish community.

The KDP and Komaleh have no legal or popular base in the Islamic Republic because of their allegiance to the enemies of Iran and are also disliked and hated by the majority of the Iranian Kurdish community.

We should also not forget that unlike the Kurdish communities in Iraq and Turkey, the Iranian Kurds are part and parcel of the Iranian society because of their identical root and origin.

In the light of these vivid actualities, all resources should be cultivated to prevent the creation of a new Israel in this region.

A tripartite meeting of Iran, Syria and Turkey should be called at the earliest to clean the slate in North Iraq.

Iran: Commentary Views Clashes With DPIK on Western Border

NC0208194396 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 30 Jul 96 p 2

[Matin Moslem commentary: "Safeguarding the Frontiers of the Islamic Revolution"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Sunday [28 July], the Western areas of the country witnessed developments resulting from the provocations of counterrevolutionaries and the appropriate response by the capable forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC]. The IRGC headquarters reported briefly on the clash in a statement issued yesterday. It added that the operations had been completed successfully and at least 25 influential members of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kordestan [DPIK] had been killed.

Meanwhile, the extent of the operations and the successes achieved were such that international news circles disseminated news of it with mentions of the losses sustained by the DPIK.

The intense and decisive action by the IRGC is in itself reason for rejoicing. The fact is that in the era of the country's reconstruction and prosperity, the counterrevolutionaries and the controversial forces deployed in the west of Iran and in northern Iraq had stepped up their provocations and had directed the brunt of their attacks not at armed forces who could resist them, but at innocent civilians. During the past few months, frequent reports of the sorrows and tribulations of the people were disseminated which pained the hearts of every compassionate Iranian and Muslim.

The counterrevolutionaries deluded themselves that with such a policy they would be able to halt the trend of development and construction in the western parts of our country, and compel the government to move from its phase of construction to a military phase against them. This would plunge the region into military turmoil and would generate an atmosphere of insecurity and psychological pressure to motivate the people to react against the government. Most important of all this would generate a negative climate for the country in international relations.

In addition, the Iraqi regime unfortunately has constantly been the main culprit in supporting the counterrevolutionaries, especially the grouplet known as the Democratic party. The Ba'thist Party's pretext that it has no presence or leadership in northern Iraq due to the existence of Western support for the Kurds is not convincing because, as many concede, such destructive attacks in general are carried out with logistical support from the Iraqi forces.

The first step the Iraqi Government should take to elicit Iran's goodwill in forging regional cooperation should be to impose political and military restrictions on the DPIK, and even drive it from the border regions. Any laxity in carrying out this important regional responsibility will result in the practical manifestation of the will of the Iranian nation and government in the face of all kinds of enemies of this land and its waters.

Iran: Daily Condemns Atlanta Bomb, Similar Acts of Violence

LD0308103196 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 28 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial, "Atlanta Blast is Condemned, but..."]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A bomb explosion in the Olympic City of Atlanta early yesterday sent shock waves across the globe. It was the second such trauma in less than two weeks following a mid-air explosion on July 18 which killed 229 persons aboard a TWA passenger plane.

Unequivocally these blasts and other similar acts of wanton violence are to be condemned by all whose hearts that still beat for human beings no matter where and who they are, with the exception of oppressors and terrorists.

In cases such as the Olympic City no excuse or justification is acceptable as a motive because the lives of innocent civilians are at stake.

Despite serious and harsh condemnsations coupled with stern warnings, such incidents, the latest of which occurred at the heart of the Olympic Games, are continuing and there is no end in sight. Perpetrators of these terrorist acts must be punished.

But this is only part of the story. If we really want to see an end to these reprehensible, uncivilized and inhuman behaviour of certain people, we have to find out the root and cause of such conduct.

Causes of different terrorist attacks could be different from place to place. We are not talking about criminal and anti-social elements. We are referring to some who have genuine problems and for them all legal doors to redress their grievances have been closed.

Common sense says that when genuine problems and issues of the aggrieved are not addressed, they take any desperate measures and without using simple logic they put the lives of innocent civilians at risk.

In case of the United States, the causes of internal strife are clear. Even his closest allies in the administration agree that President Bill Clinton in paying undue and uninvited attention to internal matters of other countries at the expense of his own country's domestic affairs.

As a presidential candidate, the same Clinton used to make his predecessor a target of serious criticism for being preoccupied with international issues at the cost of domestic affairs.

Since he entered the White House it became clear that there is no connection between Clinton's rhetoric and actions. His former Defence Secretary Dick Cheney once rightly commented that Clinton is 'one of the least competent leaders in matters of foreign policy in the 20th Century.'

Dissatisfaction and disappointment among the Americans now know no boundary and due to its advances in technology, its ordinary citizens are able to make powerful home-made bombs and even highly sophisticated explosive devices in their home laboratories.

This undesirable social situation in the United States has surfaced while unrestricted individual and economic freedoms are the norm in that country.

In fact, in the United States, social justice is sacrificed at the altar of unrestricted personal freedom.

These are the bitter facts which have created two different classes in the American society — the affluent, who enjoy the full support of the pressure groups — and the disgruntled, who are the victims of capitalists and opportunists.

What we are trying to cultivate is 'common sense', which calls for a realistic search for ordinary people's genuine problems and to address them, no matter where they exist.

Iran: Paper Criticizes Bahrain's Anti-Iranian Allegations

NC0408144696 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 24 Jul 96 p 16

[Unattributed commentary: "A Word With the Inexperienced Leaders in Manama"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 26 Tir 1375 [16 July 1996], Bahraini television cited Manama's AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ, alleging that the Islamic Republic of Iran should admit that it was involved in the recent unrest in Bahrain!

Bahraini television commented that it is not sufficient for Iran to say that it will stop its propaganda attacks against Bahrain and that it is willing to establish friendly relations with Bahrain... [ellipsis as published]

The impudence of Bahrain's officials and mass media undoubtedly stems from the tolerance that we have shown toward the spiteful behavior of the Manama leaders. This is not the first time that they have shown in practice that they lack the basic ability to accept the Islamic Republic's policy of self-restraint vis-a-vis regional problems and issues.

With these propaganda gestures and its record in confronting the crises in Bahrain, the Manama regime has proven that it not only lacks the least bit of statesmanship and is incapable of governing a tiny 600 sq km desert known as Bahrain, but that it is also unaware of the principles ruling international relations and the values that govern bilateral relations between neighbors. And this is an unfortunate problem that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been facing for years in the Persian Gulf.

A major part of the Islamic Republic's political energy in the postrevolution years has been spent countering plots and plans that the hegemonistic and mischievous American and British governments have hatched and in the implementations of which the flimsy regional regimes, namely the Manama regime, have been directly or indirectly involved.

In addition to the concern it has for peace and stability in the Persian Gulf and it realization — for which it spares no efforts — the Islamic Republic of Iran does not permit political or propaganda mischief by anyone. It would be better for the Manama leaders not to blame others for their domestic crisis, which stems from their own ineptness in governing their small country and, instead of accusing one country or another, to try to reform their oppressive behavior toward their people.

Even if the Bahraini leaders shut their eyes and ears to reality and feign ignorance, today all the world, even those who chart the Manama regime's course in its political and propaganda mischiefs in the region, knows that the roots of Bahrain's problems are internal and should be solved there.

It is almost two years now that the Bahraini shaykhdom has been burning with the fires of domestic unrest. Because of its indifference to the demands of the Muslim people on that little island, the Manama regime has been unable to extinguish the fires of domestic unrest and the people's rage through the suppression and repression of the people. This is why it is trying to justify its incompetence by accusing the Islamic Republic of Iran of supporting the dissenters in Bahrain.

The Bahraini people are protesting against the absence of an open political atmosphere and of respect for individual freedoms in society, against the spread of moral decadence among the rulers, against bad management by state officials, against the aggravation of the economic crisis, and against the suppression of the people.

The Bahraini people demand the revival of the parliamentary system and an end to the concentration of power in the hands of the Al Khalifah clan. They also protest the imposition of economic problems, specifically unemployment, on the Shiites in that country, who constitute more than half the population.

The Bahraini parliament was dissolved in 1354 [1975] by Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, and the monopoly of power has remained in the hands of the Al Khalifah clan. Nevertheless in 1371 [1992] a body known as the Consultative Council, comprised of 30 members of the nobility and entrepreneurs who were directly selected by the Bahraini shaykh, replaced parliament. This council, which was created amid the intensification of social protests over the absence of a legislative branch in the country, was unable to show independence because of its dependence on the ruling family. The Manama Government was accused of trying to keep power within the hands of the Al Khalifah clan and of opposing the division of power among the three branches of government — that is, the legislative, judicial, and executive branches. This phenomenon — that is, avoiding legitimacy and the parliamentary system — was one of the major factors that sparked off the crisis in the social structure of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council members; and this crisis has emerged every so often and in varying degrees in these countries. The small countries in the southern Persian Gulf support a shaykhdom system, which is another form of monopolistic power. This phenomenon can be seen not only in Bahrain but, to varying degrees, in the other regional shaykhdoms as well.

The opponents of Bahrain's rule want the return of the parliamentary system. They demand respect for the political and religious freedoms of the people, the release of the political prisoners, and an end to government officials' encroachments on mosques in Bahrain. They believe that for years the government has been exercising a policy that is prejudicial against the Shiites, who comprise more than half of the 500,000-strong population in Bahrain, causing unemployment to be a major problem for a very large number of Shiites.

Therefore, despite what the Bahraini rulers think and despite their efforts to hide their own weakness by attributing the incidents in their shaykhdom to foreigners, the roots of this unrest should be sought inside that small island in the southern Persian Gulf. The crisis in Bahraini has its roots in the political, social, and economic structure of that country. And as long as this structure based on the monopolistic rule of a family of nobles over the nation is not changed, there can be no hopes for an improvement in the situation.

Iran: Foreign Minister Velayati Upbeat on Results of Belarus Trip

LD0208193696 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The foreign minister ['Ali Akbar Velayati] on returning from his visit to Belarus, described the outcome of his talks with that country's authorities as positive.

[Begin Velayati recording] In our talks with that country's officials, [including] the president, prime minister, foreign minister, and foreign trade minister, we reached preliminary agreement about the growth in the scope of our relations. The grounds for that are already there.

During [First Vice President] Dr. Habibi's visit there six agreements were concluded. We are getting closer to implementing those agreements. Their foreign trade minister will be visiting Iran in the near future to set up a joint commission. Their foreign minister will be coming to Iran to pave the way for their president's visit to Iran.

Before that, a senior expert delegation from our Commerce Ministry will be going to Belarus in order to prepare the way for a successful convening of the joint commission.

Scientific and cultural cooperation was another part of the agreements. A Persian language chair is to be set up at the Minsk University in the capital. [end recording]

Replying to a question by our correspondent about the outcome of his participation in the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] Contact Group Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Geneva, he said: Islamic states, specifically the OIC Contact Group, must continue their efforts in the reconstruction of that country [Bosnia] to prevent their rights and their achievements through the resistance and steadfastness of the Bosnian Muslims, from being wasted.

Mr Velayati added: During the recent meeting of the Contact Group in Geneva, the Iran called for the setting up of groups to oversee the forthcoming Bosnian elections to ensure that the results of these elections precisely match the votes of the Bosnian nation.

The foreign minister pointed out that Islamic states must try to prevent Western countries making their economic aid [to Bosnia] dependent on the conduct of Bosnian elections.

Iran: Editorial Stresses Importance of United Islamic Front

NC0208133496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 29 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "The Unity Week: Best Occasion for Forging a United Islamic Front"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On the occasion of the birth anniversary of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Rabi' al-Awwal 12-17 has been termed the Unity Week intended to explore avenues of bringing about unity among different Islamic schools of thought.

While the world is shackled in tribulation and discord, the life-inspiring message of Islam infuses the heart and soul of every believer with hope and inspiration: "And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited..." (3:103)

Indeed, by following this sublime divine guideline, the believers can put an end to the rift created by the enemies of Islam among the different Islamic branches with the sole aim of achieving their heinous objective of 'divide and rule'.

One cannot deny the fact that there are differences among various Islamic schools of thought. These differences, however, should not hinder the formation of a solid front by the worshipers of one God, who follow the teachings of one Prophet (S)[Peace Be Upon Him] and one Holy Book, saying their prayers towards one Kiblah.

The fact that the Muslims adhere to the same God, Prophet, and divine scripture indicates that the differences among various schools of thought in Islam are not fundamental. In other words, it is not impossible to converge the various branches of Islam, accomplishing the formation of a unified Ummah.

However, it is neither feasible nor possible to unify different schools of thought. One cannot ask the followers of a specific school of thought to forgo their ideological doctrines and principles. It is neither practical nor possible to do so.

Muslim unity is indispensable for the Islamic world if the Muslims are to survive in the crosscurrent of cultural, economic and political waves of change.

The Muslims, constituting one-fifth of the world population, control the lion's share of the lifeblood of industrial societies, oil, and a considerable amount of other vital resources. Unfortunately, they have not been able to safeguard their interests due to lack of unity.

Nevertheless, the Muslims do not have a permanent seat at the UN Security Council, as a result of which they have suffered heavy losses inflicted on them by the wielders of veto power ever since the formation of the world body.

Now that a new world order is emerging, it is time for the Muslims to rely on their faith, wealth, natural resources and population, to form a powerful bloc to protect their own interests. The Unity Week is an auspicious occasion highlighting the necessity for seeking this sublime goal.

Iran: Commentary—Claims of Terrorism Reveal U.S. 'Fears' of Islam

LD0408090596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0346 GMT 4 Aug 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's permanent envoy to the United Nations issued a statement on 3 July condemning the new wave of propaganda by the American media and Washington ring-leaders and describing it as irrational and an ill-considered effort for political exploitation of the atmosphere created by the death of innocent Americans in the two incidents of the TWA plane crash and the bomb explosion at the Olympic park.

U.S. officials have been trying for the last two weeks, by ignoring the true causes of terrorism — which stems from the general dissatisfaction of the people inside America and in those states where American troops are stationed — to pave the way for creating chaos in the Persian Gulf region and a psychological war against Iran and thus fulfill their ominous intentions, which are inspired by international Zionist circles.

The raising of allegations of terrorism against the Islamic Republic of Iran by the White House is not new at all. This has always been one of the guidelines of U.S. foreign policy in the Persian Gulf region. This method has failed many times and its invalidity has clearly been demonstrated, yet it has not been replaced by Washington with a realistic view of international issues.

The reality is that what America fears is the spiritual strength and formidable and magnetic power of the Islamic revolution of Iran, which, despite hostile efforts by America and Israel, is extending its roots and flourishing and has overshadowed the Islamic regional nations and even the world. This power is in the souls and lives of Muslims who hear the message of the Iranian revolution and Islamic republic rather than weapons and act of terrorism. That is why no-one can harm it.

Anyhow, as has been stressed on many occasions, the Islamic Republic of Iran is totally prepared to play its role in international cooperation to confront terrorism and at the same time it will continue its opposition to any pressure and threats by America, acts which in themselves are a kind of unbridled state terrorism.

Iran: Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Unity, U.S. Sanctions

LD0208125596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian 0745 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Second sermon of Tehran Friday prayers by Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The birthday of Prophet Muhammad can act as a unifying factor for Muslims the world over. This is especially important at a time when the enemies of Islam are well and truly exploiting points of difference and dispute in the Islamic community as some inlets for their infiltration.

We showed some unity vis-a-vis the issue of Bosnia. Our foreign ministers sat together and adopted joint decisions and statements. Muslims, furthermore, spoke the same words at the United Nations and its Security Council sessions. The end result was that we managed to protect a number of Muslims who were under the siege of the infidels.

The issue of Palestine is much more clear-cut for us. The honor and properties of Muslims in so many crisis-ridden corners of the globe are currently being destroyed by bloodthirsty infidels. These should be our common grievances, and addressing these issues should be our prime responsibility today.

Islam itself is in danger today. The United States is not hostile to us just because we are Iranians. If say Turkey or Iraq adopted the same stances as Iran, they would be subjected to the same degree of U.S. opposition. If these political stances were adopted even by some circles within the Christian world, it would still make no difference to the United States and its hostile attitude. You can see examples of this situation right now in the world.

The United States is opposed to our principled international stances. It is hostile to our quest for justice and our opposition to tyranny, aggression, and monopolistic tendencies. Here the word: We, of course means Islam. The United States is opposed to these Islamic ideas, and the result is what we see in the world today. Muslims are all united in these issues. However, some unwanted differences are preventing us from total unity.

Just look at the issue of oil. Islamic countries possess the vast proportion of the world's oil resources. All of us who sit together in an OPEC session are Muslims. What is happening to this Islamic source of wealth today in the hands of the world's oil consumers, that is to say seven or eight rich countries of the world? We are unable to cooperate with each other to consolidate the price of this wealth. Whenever we try to do this, we are told that oil cannot be turned into a political weapon.

Even on the question of Israel: If Muslims, this very same OPEC, chose to take back Palestine — without war, without quarreling, without even exchanging insults — just by using oil as a weapon, we could take back Palestine in a year, without any harm being inflicted on the world of Islam — by legal means.

They say, however, that oil cannot be a political weapon. Very well, if it cannot be a political weapon, why is it that the United States turns oil into a political weapon against us? Why is it that they can impose embargoes, but we cannot? If the United States is really embargoed by Muslim OPEC countries, if they say we will not give our oil to the United States — they do not have to after all — why is it that the United States can approve a law in its Congress and say, if even foreign companies want to invest in Iran, we will boycott them — but we cannot? It does not even need a law, just a decision: We will not sell our oil to the United States, unless the United States stops supporting Israel. What would happen in the world if we just said this? The United States has to get 7, 8 million barrels a day of oil, and it cannot get it anywhere, apart from us.

The United States uses everything it has against us in this way: with fighter planes, with weapons, with medical matters, even with wheat, foodstuffs, and advanced technology. Whenever it likes, it does not give them to whichever country it chooses. It does not have to give them. It imposes embargoes on this or that country.

Well, we Muslims — it is not even a question of unity, it is a question of coordination for safeguarding our interests. If we wanted to alter the price of oil, it would require the same thing. The moment we try to decide to alter the price of oil, we see that an Islamic country produces 1 million extra barrels of oil and wrecks everything.

It is, therefore, very important that we stop insisting on divisive slogans; that we all drop divisive issues, both Sunnis and us. Let us leave them for another occasion. We can leave them for a time when we are not exposed to threats. Let us concern ourselves instead with our shared interests. If we act together, I am certain that the main problems of the world of Islam will be solved. The problem of Afghanistan will be solved. Kashmir will be solved. Tajikistan will be solved. Karabakh will be solved. Bosnia will remain a strong Muslim country. Palestine will be solved. There will be no bloodshed in Somalia. Yemen will not have any civil wars. This is the cause of all the unnecessary conflicts that take place because of religious motives, which have deep roots, or because of political motives, which arise from the political greed of the world's politicians, and so on: Special issues of which you, unfortunately, see many examples in the world of Islam.

Therefore, when we speak about the issue of unity... [pauses] Of course, unity is our very ultimate aim, as the whole concept is very profound and cannot be achieved easily. What comes before unity is the ability to avoid quarrels and mutually destructive moves. Prior to unity, there should be at least some consideration for our common interests and some emphasis on our commonalities. Praise be to God, the present modern system of international communications, as well as regional forums such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, can show us the way to some extent.

The vigilance and awareness of youth is also valuable for us. We should use the awareness of youth to destroy the seeds of sedition sown by people who maintain their adherence to very old and redundant traditions, thus impeding the fulfillment of the objective of achieving cohesion and solidarity among 1.3 billion Muslims the world over.

The fact that today you see Islam enjoying popularity among the youth of the Muslim world, and despite the differences between Shiites and Sunnis — which the enemies always try to keep alive for public opinion — Iran is held dear and is considered a focal point by the Sunni youth and students of religious sciences, is an indication of the growing trend of vigilance and awareness on the one hand, and the demise of erroneous notions of fanaticism and other illogical and irrational ideas, on the other hand.

God willing, in the future we will be able to achieve better things and make better use of the resources of the Islamic world, its market of 1.3 billion people, the votes of its 50 or so UN members, and finally its strategic areas, such as the Suez Canal, Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf, Caspian Sea, and many other areas which belong to us.

Moreover, hopefully, we will be able to make better use of the valuable sources of energy that lie in Islamic countries. Also, we hope to be able to employ the good technical and scientific workforce that has been trained in the past few years. We should revive the Islamic civilization as a modern and up-to-date phenomenon, and not as it was many centuries ago. [crowd chants: "God is great!"]

I can see one of the manifestations of this unity in these very Friday prayer ceremonies today, where great ulema, senior figures from the Sunni tradition from friendly countries are here today. The Friday prayers are being carried out here today in the presence of people who are prayer leaders in their own countries. They are congregational prayer leaders or Friday prayer leaders. We are also holding our prayers in the presence of 600 Sunni basijis. These are manifestations of unity, but we seek in-depth unity elsewhere, in-depth cooperation.

Other historical anniversaries that I must mention briefly are, first, the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan, which occurs around this time. The Americans committed that great crime in history. It is amazing that they still consider themselves to be the standard-bearers of nuclear disarmament. No-one apart from the United States has used the atomic bomb in the world. They turned hundreds of thousands of human beings into dust in one day. I have visited Hiroshima and seen the effects of that bomb explosion; also in Nagasaki. The effects are still frightening to this very day, let alone back then.

The Americans have this clear past record. Today, too, they have the largest arsenal of atomic weapons. It is the largest in terms of nuclear arms. Years ago, before there was such a thing as intercontinental missiles, U.S. planes carrying atomic bombs, B-52's, used to fly around the world 24 hours a day. Their mission was to do just this: to fly around the world to make sure that U.S. interests were not threatened anywhere in the world. If there was a threat, they had orders to drop the atomic bomb.

These same people are imposing sanctions on us today on the pretext that Iran may one day use its nuclear power plant in Bushehr to produce plutonium for atomic bombs. They are asking other countries not to cooperate with us on the production of energy or the peaceful and medical uses of the atom. You see what kind of bullying this is. You see what a quest for monopolizing power it is. They have the largest atomic arsenal. They have a past record of crime and genocide. They have in addition to this, armed their own illegitimate creation, Israel, with atomic weapons — in the middle of Muslim countries — and they continue to give it atomic support. [Crowd chants: "Death to America"]

What right has that country — with such a history, background, and reputation — to tell other countries that they should not give nuclear power plants or other nuclear industry to Iran? Atomic energy is not something that is only used in weapons. Atomic energy is used more in the fields of health and hygiene today than in destructive fields.

You hear everyday in Iran that we are using our atomic know-how and our nuclear knowledge to produce various substances that are used for medication. These are quite expensive substances and have nothing to do with war and other fields.

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency announces many times each year that there is no evidence that Iranians are trying to produce nuclear weapons through their nuclear work. Our institutions are open and international inspectors come any time they like, without letting us know beforehand. They come, do their inspections, and return. This says there is nothing, but they make a hue and cry.

Two or three days ago an interesting incident took place at one of our gas-generated, thermal power plants. These same sources created much hue and cry. There are kits that workers carry with them in sensitive areas for safety at work. They alert workers if there is too much pollution or other things that may put workers at risk. The main core, which is made of a nuclear substance, had fallen on the ground and broke. A worker picked it up. The kit that shows exposure levels contained a little radiation. The worker who had received the injury was soon taken away to be treated and others who were around were also checked for radiation. There was so much hue and cry that a nuclear incident had taken place in Iran. This is something that can happen in any sensitive factory where you many workers' clothing warns them against radiation. That is to keep the workplace safe. That is one of the standard requirements in the country. All of the world recognizes such safety kits, but mischievous propaganda, which they see have no effect, continue.

Another event this week that I should stress is that of the European Union session two days ago. When the Sharm al-Shaykh summit was in progress, and the U.S. President was trying to take advantage of the polluted atmosphere after the Saudi explosion to act against Iran, some of the leaders said: Under these circumstances it cannot be done; we will have another session on the fight against terrorism. That was planned for two or three days ago.

The Americans sent another message against Iran to the session. The French, as members, refused even to have the U.S. message discussed in the session. That is how successful the Americans are. When they make a proposal against Iran in a formal session, it is not even placed on the agenda. That is because, like us, the Europeans understand that the United States wants to monopolize and be the custodians of world trade and bother or impose sanctions on anyone they wish. Because they understand, they resist. It is not for our sake. Many people think that Europe is supporting Iran; Europe is protecting its own interests, so that the United States does not ratify a law in its parliament to impose sanctions on, say, a French company for investing in such and such a country. They say, what has it to do with you? The U.S. Congress makes laws for the United

States. It cannot monopolize world trade that way. It is those monopolistic attitudes that create those incidents. [passage omitted]

Iran: Militant Clergy To Support Nateq-Nuri

LD0408155696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 29 Jul 96 p 1,2

[Unattributed report: "Groups in Agreement With Clergy Support Mr. Nateq-Nuri for Presidency"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Groups in agreement with the Clergy intend to support Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Nateq-Nuri in the coming presidential elections, Dr. Mohammed Javad Larijani said.

Answering another question on the future presidential elections, he said: The presidential elections are an opportunity to demonstrate the perfection of the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran and I believe that during the next term of presidency, revolutionary forces will take new posts and will make the system more efficient. Every one will be entering this divine test with enthusiasm and purity, God willing.

On whether or not the construction program will continue during the net term of presidency, he said: Construction is a national goal, is supported by the eminent leader and will continue.

The continuation of the construction process has nothing to do with the presidential elections. Of course His Excellency Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani is one of the pillars of the revolution and the future president will definitely learn from his experiences and guidance, he added.

Stating that political forces will be competing actively in the elections, he said: Factions and groups in agreement with the Militant Clergy Association intend to announce His Excellency Mr. Nateq-Nuri as their presidential candidate, and other groups will also introduce their own candidates.

On cooperation between factions in the fifth Majles, he said: The Majles deputies are cooperating with each other in a healthy climate, most probably because of the proper management of the Majles Speaker.

He added: The fifth Majles follows the line of the Guardianship of the Jurisconsult and the line has a firm position in the Majles. [passage omitted]

Iran: Larijani on Support For Nateq-Nuri as President

96LA0394A Tehran RESALAT in Persian 29 Jul 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] News Division: The organizations aligned with the clergy in the elections for the president of the republic intend to support Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Nateq-Nuri.

This statement was made by Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani in answer to a question concerning the next president of the republic. In answer to another question concerning the coming elections for president of the republic, Dr. Larijani said: The elections for president of the republic are an opportunity to demonstrate the perfection of the Islamic Republic. In my view, in the next term for president of the republic the revolutionary forces will have new responsibilities and they will create greater skill. God willing, everyone will enter this divine test with zeal, eagerness and blessings.

He was asked whether reconstruction programs will also continue under the next term for president of the republic. He said: The country's reconstruction is a national goal which is supported by the exalted leader, and this will continue.

He added: Continuation of the reconstruction has nothing to do with the elections for president of the republic. Of course Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani is one of the owners of the revolution, and the next president of the republic will certainly make use of his experience and guidance.

Dr. Larijani said that the political forces will compete actively in the elections for president of the republic. He said: The factions and organizations aligned with the Militant Clergy Association [Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez] intend to present Mr Nateq-Nuri as a candidate for president of the republic, and the other groups will certainly also present their candidates.

He was asked about the way in which the existing factions will cooperate in the Fifth Majles. He said: The deputies of the Fifth Majles are cooperating in a sound atmosphere. Perhaps the major reason for this is the speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles's good management.

He added: The Fifth Majles follows the line of the vice-regency of the chief jurisconsult, and the vice-regent's line is quite strong in the Majles.

Speaking to a group of education and training chiefs, Dr. Larijani dedicated his talk to the government's effectiveness. He said: The Islamic Republic of Iran's circle of influence goes beyond Iran's borders. We must present to the world an effective civil structure based on Islamic thought.

If we can present a civil structure based on Islamic thought, we will have in reality built a new civilization.

Observing that liberal civilization is a domineering civilization, he said: With the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran, after a long period of decline Islamic civilization was revived, and this has been worrying for the domineering systems in the West.

Dr. Larijani cited the formation of the government of the Islamic Republic in Iran and the spread of the Islamic movements in the world as two important outcomes of the triumph of the Islamic revolution of Iran. He said: The success of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has important effects in the spread of the Islamic movements, and the success of Islamic activities in the farthest corners of the world also has special importance for the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He noted that His Holiness Imam Khomeyni's (peace be upon him) goal was to revive Islam throughout the world. He said: If we continue on His Holiness the late Imam's path, we will certainly succeed. What gives us greatness in the world is not just reconstruction, it is also the revival of Islam.

He discussed the important elements of effectiveness. He said: An accurate understanding of the situation, the correct selection of goals, the correct selection of the ways to reach them and organization of resources for taking steps to reach goals are the considered the important factors in effectiveness.

The Islamic Consultative Majles deputy from Tehran said that effectiveness needs the creation of a culture of effectiveness in society. He said: The correct selection of goals and work methods depends on the manager's effectiveness. An effective manager must put his forces to work in the appropriate place.

He added: The signs of ineffectiveness are when a manager is worried about the skill of his subordinates, viewing that as a threat to his employment success.

Dr. Larijani noted that we must have an accurate understanding of the nation's structure. He said: When discussing development we must think about increasing effectiveness.

He added: Our efforts today to rebuild the country do not pertain only to our own lives. Rather, this is our duty to the entire Islamic nation, because we must provide the world with a model for an Islamic nation.

Mr Larijani discussed the important responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Training's managers and the teachers in the schools in training students. He said: Making students aware of civilized life takes precedence over all other things, and we must instill the idea of civilization into the minds of students.

Based on our correspondent's report, during this congress Mr Ahmad Zerehani, deputy minister of education and training for public participation and non-profit schools also spoke at this congress. He said that public participation in education and training is the only way to solve the nation's education and training problems. He said: This year we need a budget of about 1,000 billion tumans to manage the education and training system, of which only 523 billion is provided in the nation's budget for this purpose. We must meet the needs through persons of means, with correct and planned management.

He emphasized the need for attention to the harm caused by the participation of individuals in education and training.. He said: Education and training demands participation that is in line with Islamic education and training.

He said that implementation of the Education and Training District Councils Law is one of the best ways to solve the problems with education and training and give participation to the people.

Mr Zerehani emphasized the need to adhere to social justice in implementing the Law to Establish Non-Profit Schools. He said: We must not permit the non-profit schools to be turned into schools for the rich. The non-profit schools must be placed in the service of talented students, both rich and poor.

He said: This year the sum of one billion tumans has been made available to the chiefs of education and training so that talented students who are oppressed will be be able to study free in the non-profit schools.

Mr Zerehani said that the Ministry of Education and Training is granting loans to build and equip non-profit schools. He said: Five million tumans in profit-free loans is being paid to build non-profit schools, three million tumans in profit-free loans is being paid to buy them, and one million tumans in profit-free loans is being paid to equip them.

He added: The non-profit schools are required, for each million tumans in loans, to register free one secondary school student, one rahnema'i school student and two elementary school students.

Iran: Political Factions To Choose Own Candidates for Presidency

LD0208202596 Tehran SALAM in Persian 28 Jul 96 p 1

["Political Groups to Choose Presidential Candidate" — report by Domestic News Service]

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports from political circles indicate that extensive activities and discussions are underway to choose [presidential] the candidates.

Last week and after long discussions, several groups and organizations that form the Coalition of Groups

Following the Line of the Imam, met Engineer Mir-Hosayn Musavi and asked him to stand for the next presidential elections.

The request has the support of the Organization of the Mojahedin of the Islamic Revolution, the Office for Consolidation of Unity, and the Islamic Association of Teachers and University Lecturers.

Several members of the managing board of the Hezbollah Assembly at the Majles have also held discussions with Engineer Mir-Hosayn Musavi and repeated the request.

Other distinguished political personalities have also held discussions with Engineer Musavi on the subject.

In the meantime, the secretary general of the Islamic Coalition Association has told one of the newspapers that his organization will be proposing Hojjat ol-Eslam Nateq-Nuri as their credible candidate.

It should be noted that the Militant Clergy Association has not yet made a decision on the subject.

Other individuals being discussed as possible candidates include Dr. Hasan Habibi, the first vice president, and Mr. Velayati, the foreign minister.

Opinion polls have also been conducted on the presidential elections, and one of the evening newspapers yesterday quoted the head of the Islamic Republic News Agency on the subject.

According to reports that we have had, the opinion poll by the said organization indicates that Engineer Musavi is at the top of the list and there is a large gap between him and the second person.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani will not be standing at the next presidential election due to the country's constitution.

Political circles have also been discussing the political post that he could take after his term in office.

Asadollah Badamchian, a member of the Islamic Coalition Association, has said that Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani is most suitable for the post of the Majles speaker.

A Tehran deputy, Mr. Movahhedi Savoji, has also said that Mr. Rafsanjani is the most suitable person for the post, but has added that there is possibility that he might join the Guardian Council at the end of his term.

Iran: Vice President, Former Minister Said To Run For President

LD0208205596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 30 Jul 86 p 2

[Report: "For Your Information"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amid increasingly heated consultations on the future presidential elections, reports from political circles indicate that [First Vice President] Hasan Habibi and [former Minister of Intelligence] Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammadi Reyshahri intend to stand as candidates.

Iran: Daily Discusses Next President, Rafsanjani's Future

LD0208132696 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 29 Jul 96 , pp 1, 13

[News analysis: "Who Will be Iran's Next President?"; page 1 carries photographs of First Vice President Hasan Habibi; Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri; former Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi; Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati; and 'Ali Larijani, head of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Questions regarding the next president and the future of Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani are these days being raised in political circles with "certain speculations and forecasts," but a seasoned analyst advises: "wait and see."

Earlier, Iranians focused their attention on the elections for the fifth term of the Majles and then the elections for the Majles Presiding Board, and finally the formation of various Majles commissions drew the nation's attention.

Now the future president is the most interesting topic of discussion among Iranian politicians, business executives and laymen alike.

"Who has the best chance to be the next president?" is a question being raised in the print media and in informal chats in the drawing rooms of many houses.

A morning Persian daily, 'Salam,' is the latest to speculate that the war-time former prime minister, Mir-Hoseyn Musavi has the best chance of being the next occupant of the "'Nehade Riyasat Jamhuri" as the president.

"Mr Musavi has not been active in politics since the end of the eight-year Iraqi-imposed war in 1988. He became reclusive and his silence is not only meaningful, but it is also admirable," an observer, well-versed in Iranian politics, said to 'Iran News'.

Why is Musavi's silence meaningful and admirable?

Responding to the questions of 'Iran News,' the observer who requested anonymity, said "Mr Musavi despite all the propaganda against him, emerged as a popular political figure because his administration tackled, checked and kept the prices of consumer goods at a certain level."

"But," he said, "political realities are something else."

During the Musavi premiership, the current leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i was the president, he said.

"At that time," he recalled, "working relations between the president and prime minister were not cordial and their views on many issues related to the country's administration were wide apart."

"While making speculations and forecasts, political pundits should note that a complete coordination with the leader and his trust is a prerequisite for any future president of the Islamic Republic," a prominent political analyst commented.

He said: "It is possible that the "Rahbari" (leadership) may recognize Mr Musavi as a politician who worked hard for the country, but it is not possible for him to accept the former prime minister as the president under the present circumstances."

Musavi, as many other leaders in the Third World at the time, used to believe and practice state-sponsored and centralized economy. In 1989, Rafsanjani took the presidency and the post of premiership was abolished in the constitution. Rafsanjani launched a market economy.

A shift from the state economy to market economy resulted in many problems. The most important is prevailing high prices of consumer goods which is a direct result of the reduction of government subsidies.

Another political analyst commenting on Musavi's prospects as the president, said: "The Majles is another barrier for him."

The leftists have some 30 to 40 lawmakers in the current Majles, and the conservatives, who have the majority, will not support Musavi's bid for presidency.

Due to the above mentioned reasons, political observers see only a slim chance for Musavi to become the next president.

An informed source told 'Iran News' that, "several friends and supporters of Mr Musavi have approached him to try and bring him out of his political seclusion, but have failed."

"Mr Musavi has declined to resume his political activities," he said.

Four names for the presidency are also on the short list. They are Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, First Vice-President Hasan Habibi and Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) Director 'Ali Larijani.

Velayati and Habibi in recent statements have denied that they are planing to field their names for the presidency.

So, in theory, only two names are left in the field: Nateq-Nuri, and Larijani. But a seasoned political analyst advises political pundits to "wait and see."

"More developments may appear on Iran's political horizon, he said with no elaboration.

Iran: Ansar Letter to President

96LA0264A Tehran KAR VA KARGAR in Persian 16 May 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the invitation from the Amir Kabir Industrial University Islamic Students Society to Dr. Sorush, and the protest from the Ansar of the Hezbollah against its hosting the speech, Dr. Sorush asked in an open letter to the president of the republic that the matter be investigated.

In answer to Dr. Sorush's open letter, Ansar of the Hezbollah students addressed a letter to the president of the republic and delivered it personally to the newspaper. Part of the text of the letter is as follows:

What they are carrying on about today is not "philosophy"; it is a form of "temptation." If we cannot properly identify what is behind these ideas, we are the most stupid generation of students ever produced in the history of Iran's universities.

Wherever the secularists are in control, they pour lead down the throats of those who are dedicated to principle. Every place in the world today, from the West, to Africa and Asia, is under the boot heels of the secularists. It is only Iran that wants to act according to principle, but they do not overlook this one place either.

In our view, there could be no harder slap in the face for these promoters of secular rule than the splendid reconstruction that is now taking place throughout Iran under religious rule. This is because all the propaganda of those who call for separating religion from the government hinges on proving that religious practice and reconstruction, this world and the hereafter, religion and government, Islam and civilization, theology and civilization, cannot be combined, that the prophets had nothing to do with government and that Islam came to create astonishment (and not to teach and govern).

However, when in the Islamic government and at the hands of a clerical president of the republic every week a new dam, refinery, factory, hospital, bridge, university, or something else opens, what else can they say?

They draw the struggle beyond the domain of action into theory, and they try to prove that Islam is basically alien to making law, judgment, education, governing, and building society. Moreover, they make Islam a matter of individual worship, or in other words, they Americanize it.

Mr president of the republic:

This is a battle between two conflicting tendencies which cannot be reconciled. If compromise begins on either side, it will lead to the nullification of the foundations of that same side. We must therefore swear that we will not be the side that compromises.

The Ansar students and the Muslim university people speak with you in one voice. The only people who have the problem of hardened ears are those who do not hear or have chosen not to hear our righteous voice.

Your Excellency knows that in the last eight months, all of the foreign radio stations and the counterrevolutionary press outside the country (including the monarchists, the hypocrites and the former communists) have said thousands of words against the Ansar. They have recalled the name of Haj Faraj Dabagh as one of the "present hopes" for promoting secularism in Iran, and they have placed their hopes in those like him. Were a few hundred students this dangerous to Western interests in Iran?

Eight months ago when we raised our voices in protest against the one-sided statements and hypocrisy from the likes of him, we ourselves did not know what a sensitive place we had touched. In the last few months, however, it has become clear that the bullets have hit their mark. Now, who did they burn?

They have dumped such a torrent of propaganda on our heads from inside and outside the country that you would think that if they could only take out this group of concerned students, secularism would triumph over Islam, while they forget that we are connected to a history, a culture, and a nation. Why don't they give clear answers to our questions? What need do they have to make a martyr and a hero of a mute person who is not even willing to make an honest statement of his ideas? It would be better for the likes of him to die of chlorosis and to be exposed for what they are just before death.

Mr. Sorush's confrontations with all the nation's political issues (!), which serve no purpose (!), show the extent of his piety. From the Conference of Seyyed Jamal to the gathering in memory of Professor Motahari, he gives direction to his party everywhere to distort the foundations of religion, the great men of religion, religious history and the mysticism of religion on any pretext possible and he tells his party to struggle to use the messages of religion to justify and promote secularism and the separation of religion from the government and social life.

Let us compare his last articles before the disturbance at the Technical College with his first article after that episode, to show to what extent the hypocrisy shows through!

Mr. President of the Republic,

We have never said that he and those like him should not express their views. In recent years the party of secularists has had most of the written and spoken forums in this country at its disposal. They have more access to the public treasury than anyone else, and tens of publications and university chairs are in the hands of the West's intellectual agents. God knows that the resources of the Ansar students are less than one-thousandth of the resources of the party of secularists in this country. In these years they have said whatever they had to say and they will continue to say it. However, what we have said and will say is nothing other than this:

1. People like Haj Faraj Dabagh, according to his holiness the imam's (peace be upon him) clear will to students, must not make propaganda and promote secularism, liberal ethics and hopes and American thinking at the revolution's universities, using the government's resources, nor may they use university chairs to build cadres for their party.

2. It would be better if Haj Faraj and the party of the secularists, which is the loudspeaker for the West in Islamic Iran, would use their party to explain clearly the fundamentals of their thought and politics.

3. He must agree to debate with the Ansar students and answer our questions. Meetings for the debates between the students and Sorush could be held in 15 sessions with special names which we will announce.

We students will guarantee full security for these meetings. In these sessions specific questions will be asked which are based on his own speeches, so we can obtain clear answers in the presence of a gathering, or in more restricted sessions.

Mr. President of the Republic,

Our only reason for troubling you was that we felt that morally and logically your chastened brothers at the university ought to give some of their reasons for fighting back against the secularists to Your Excellency, the person who has created great honor for the clergy with your reconstruction. We ask Almighty God to grant your excellency more success every day.

With Thanks

Ansar of the Hezbollah Students

2/26/1375 [May 16 1996]

Iran: Official Advocates Export Diversity

96LA0304H Tehran RESALAT in Persian 6 May 96 p 15

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic Affairs Division—Relying on oil foreign exchange revenues is one of the most dangerous and difficult decisions in a nation's economy. It is one of the weakest economic foundations and one of the most unreliable tools for achieving development.

RESALAT's economic affairs correspondent reports that Dr. 'Abdol-Naser Hemati, general manager of the Iran Central Insurance Office, announced this yesterday at the Tenth Seminar to Study Iran's Economic Issues, titled "Oil-Dependent Economy and its Consequences," which was held at the central unit of the Free Islamic University College of Economics and Accounting. He said: In view of the exalted leader's comments and his emphasis on the necessity to cut the nation's economic dependence on oil, much attention must be given to this matter.

He added: As His Excellency said: We must do something so that the nation of Iran will not be dependent on its oil. Unfortunately, today oil is dependent on the policies of big companies and plunderers, and in reality oil is in their clutches. The oil belongs to us, but making policy on it is in the hands of others. Such capital is a headache.

Continuing, Dr. Hemati noted: The exalted leader's comments make clear to everyone the situation prevailing in the oil market, and experience has shown that the policies have always been to the detriment of the producers and that every day OPEC is losing its power to make decisions. Most of the decisions are subject to the influence of foreigners.

Dr. Hemati said: Another characteristic that oil has brought to some countries, including our country, is a one-product economy, which has brought instability to export revenues. The fluctuations arising from this item have had a direct effect on the nation's economic programs, and they defeat any kind of organized planning. He added: The only way to end this problem is to diversify exports, because fluctuations with a variety of goods ultimately guide a country in the direction of stable foreign exchange revenues.

The general chief of the Iran Central Insurance said: Another factor that must be considered in the matter of oil exports is its importance as a form of national wealth, and the fact that oil reserves are limited and will one day come to an end, and yet at the same time, future generations will have to use it. Apart from this, in view of the calculations that have been done, in the long term the changing cost of extracting oil will bring us to a place where the closer we get to exhausting the reserves, the higher the extraction costs, and ultimately it will not be economical to extract oil for export.

He noted: Another matter that must receive attention is the growing population and the increasing consumption. Increased consumption will leave less oil for exports, and this in itself makes it more necessary than ever not to rely on oil. Dr. Hemati noted that exports have always been discussed in the world as the primary factor in the economic growth of nations. He said: Exports bring about growth, this brings production, and the nation's production is exported. The nation's wealth should not be exported.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Sees 'Bleak Future' for CTBT

BK0508104096 Karachi DAWN in English 4 Aug 96

[Report by staff reporter: "Asif Seeks Bleak Future for CTBT"— received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore, Aug 3 — Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has said he sees bleak future for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] because of the Indian obduracy and the Western countries' emphasis on nuclear non-proliferation instead of nuclear disarmament.

However, he said, Pakistan would not block the treaty. But at the same time made it clear that Islamabad would not sign the CTBT or undertake any unilateral obligation or make any commitment unless India did so.

Responding to a question at a news conference at his Raiwind Road residence outside Lahore on Saturday [3 August], where he is recuperating from a kidney operation, he said: "I see a very bleak future for the treaty (CTBT) because of two reasons: the Indian attitude and the Western countries' desire to keep their arms in a state-of-art position while preventing other countries from doing so."

He said Pakistan differed with the Indian view that there should be a definite time-frame for nuclear disarmament, but it was certainly in favour of nuclear disarmament on an equitable basis. He said it was regrettable that the Western countries talked of nuclear non-proliferation but did not speak of nuclear disarmament. Some countries, the minister pointed out, wanted to have a provision for non-detectable tests like cold tests or zero yield tests but Pakistan was opposed to such an approach. For Pakistan, he said, "test ban means a complete test ban and no more tests".

The minister said: "In recent weeks, there has been a lot of speculation about Pakistan's position on the CTBT. Allegations ranging from a 'softening' of Pakistan's position to a 'sell-out' on the nuclear programme have been made against the government. Such speculations and allegations are not only unfounded but mischievous." He said Pakistan was against the proliferation of nuclear weapons especially in South Asia. "We favour an equitable and non-discriminatory approach to issues of non-proliferation in our region. We are not prepared to undertake any unilateral obligation or commitment in this regard." The minister added: "Pakistan has always said that the real threat of proliferation in South Asia is from India. This is evident today from India's position on the CTBT. India not only harbours nuclear ambitions but has vigorously pursued the development of its nuclear and ballistic weapons programme. It construes the CTBT as a major impediment to the realisation of its nuclear objectives.

"India is engaged in sabotaging the CTBT. It has said that it will not sign the treaty and has threatened to block it unless its Entry-into-Force provisions, which require India's adherence, are changed. India stands completely isolated in its efforts to demolish the treaty, the conclusion of which is a goal long espoused by the Non-aligned Movement". Pakistan, the minister said, by its constructive participation in negotiations on the CTBT had once again demonstrated its good faith and sincerity towards seeking equitable and non-discriminatory measures to remove the threat of nuclear proliferation from the world.

The foreign minister said: "In supporting the CTBT we have always said that it must be universal and comprehensive. We have also said that CTBT without India would be meaningless for South Asia. We would like to see India reconsider its position and accede to the CTBT. I would like to categorically affirm that until such time, it would not be possible for Pakistan to sign or accede to the treaty nor would the treaty come into effect legally".

Sardar Asif said: "India alone must assume full responsibility for sabotaging the CTBT, a global initiative that would have contributed to the efforts of the international community for the realisation of the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation." He said when Pakistan said that it would not block the treaty, it simply meant that it would not prevent it from going to the UN General Assembly. But, he clarified, this did not mean that Pakistan would unilaterally sign it. He said it was purely a technical and procedural matter which had nothing to do with the substance of the treaty. India, he said, was trying to block the treaty to get its viewpoint on "Entry-into-Force" provisions. "This is a selfish attitude. The world will not accept it and India will go into further isolation". The minister said he believed that eventually the draft treaty would go to the United Nations General Assembly despite opposition by India.

Pakistan: Ali Rules Out Taking Unilateral Obligation on Nuclear Issue

BK0308113696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has categorically stated that Pakistan would not undertake any unilateral obligation or commitment on the nuclear issue. Addressing a news conference in Lahore today, he said Pakistan is against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and in favor of an equitable and nondiscriminatory approach to the issue of nonproliferation in the region. He said the real threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia is from India, which is evident from its latest position on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

About allegations of softening of Pakistan's position on the nuclear program leveled by the opposition parties against the government, the foreign minister said such speculations are not only unfounded but mischievous. He asked the opposition parties to be very careful while giving statements on sensitive national issues, like country's nuclear program and Kashmir.

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Accuses India of Sabotaging CTBT

BK0308135496 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has urged the opposition to be extra careful while talking about sensitive national issues like the country's nuclear program and the Kashmir dispute. Addressing a news conference in Lahore today, the foreign minister said Pakistan's position on nuclear issue is clear that we are against the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region but we are not prepared to undertake any unilateral obligation or commitment in this regard. He expressed concern over the controversy initiated by certain political parties on the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] by Pakistan. He said the real threat emanates from India, and this is also evident to the international community from India's position on the CTBT.

Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said India is engaged in sabotaging CTBT and, therefore, it has been virtually isolated. India, he said, not only harbors nuclear ambitions but has vigorously pursued the development of its nuclear and ballistic weapons program. It construes the CTBT as a major impediment in the realization of its nuclear objective. On the other hand, the foreign minister said, by participating in the negotiations, Pakistan has demonstrated its good faith and sincerity toward seeking equitable and nondiscriminatory measures to remove the threat of proliferation from the world.

Pakistan: Defense Minister—Islambad Not To Sign CTBT Unilaterally

BK0308154596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 3 Aug 96 p 1

[PPI report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DASKA (PPI)—Federal Minister for Defence Aftab Shaban Mirani has said that Pakistan would not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) unilaterally.

Talking to newsmen at Civil Rest House here Friday [2 August], he said that Islamabad would never yield to international pressure against its peaceful nuclear programme. Pakistan, he said, would not sign any document, which could effect its independence and security.

The Defence Minister said that PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government would never compromise on the country's security. If a solution of the nuclear issue has to be found, it would have to be mutual and regional but not unilateral.

Aftab Shaban Mirani said that Pakistan's viewpoint has at last been accepted by world powers. "Pakistan is no more compelled to accept any restriction on its nuclear programme", as has already been stated by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto clearly by which she meant the signing of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), without India signing it too.

He said in fact, when PPP government had taken over in 1993, Pakistan was facing unbearable pressure to roll back its nuclear programme, but the government, he said, took a firm stand and made the world realise that no peace could be brought about in South Asia if Pakistan is made to sign it unilaterally.

"Today the comity of the nations has accepted Pakistan's viewpoint and now international efforts are afoot for a regional solution only," he said. Earlier, the Minister during his meeting with local PPP workers and lawyers, said that the present elected government is struggling hard to provide all basic facilities to the masses and a number of comprehensive programmes and developmental schemes are being introduced in this regard. He said the increasing rate of population is the biggest problem of the country now. MPAs [Members of Provincial Assembly] Ch [Chaudhary] Sadaqat Ali, Ch Armughan Subhani and Major (Retd) Saifullah Cheema were also present on the occasion.

Pakistan: Leghari Holds 'Significant' Talks With Nuclear Scientists

BK0308094096 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 1 Aug 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by JANG's special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reliable sources, President Farooq Leghari has begun consultations with the heads of the country's important nuclear institutes. Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed, Atomic Energy Commission chairman, met with President Leghari on 31 July. Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan will meet with the president on 01 August.

Circles in Islamabad have described these meetings as very significant. It is said that President Leghari is consulting with these scientists regarding the CTBT. Major General (Retired) Khursheed Ali Khan, North-West Frontier Province governor, also met the president yesterday, while MNA [Member of National Assembly] Ghazanfar Gul and former Federal Minister Khawaja Ahmed Tariq Rahim will meet with him today.

Pakistan: 'Renowned' Nuclear Scientist Comments on Nuclear Program

BK0208132496 Rawalpindi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 1 Aug 96 pp 1, 7

[NNI report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Qadeer Khan, project director of the AQ Khan laboratories and renowned Pakistani nuclear scientist, has said: I am fully confident that the elected government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and our armed forces will never compromise regarding the country's nuclear program, which is of vital national importance. In an exclusive interview on the 20th anniversary of the AQ Khan Research Laboratories, he said that we have made many sacrifices and have paid a heavy price for our nuclear program. It is because of this program that we have attained great stature in the international community and have a place on the world's nuclear map.

He said we should always protect this program and should remember that it is only because of this program that we have been invited to participate in the CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] talks, which include the five major powers, Israel, and India. This is a clear acknowledgment of our achievements in the field of nuclear technology. He said that Kahuta is a symbol of our national pride and a story of our expertise. It is proof of the determination of a respected nation, which has continued its journey toward self-reliance and success despite pressure from adversaries and all other difficulties. He also said: I have received a lot of respect and admiration from my people for the job I have done for my country. I believe, however, that I could not have achieved this difficult goal alone. It has been possible through the joint efforts of my colleagues and the Government of Pakistan and, above all, due to the best wishes of my people.

Dr. Qadeer said: It is true that Kahuta has enjoyed continuous tremendous political support over the past 20 years; the program could progress because of that support. During these years, no government has ever yielded to international pressure to close down the project or freeze the nuclear program. This program was started by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the first elected prime minister of Pakistan, and he very boldly faced all of the conspiracies against it. He did not even hesitate to sacrifice his life for the sake of the country's nuclear program. His association with this program was unshakable. His daughter Benazir Bhutto also has a soft spot for this program, and she has also extended every kind of help and assistance.

Dr. Qadeer said: I believe that only a strong government can endure this kind of pressure, and our leaders are bearing this pressure very courageously. It is very upsetting, however, when people say that under this or that government the nuclear program was capped or rolled back. This is a mean and baseless allegation, and important national interests are overlooked when such allegations are hurled to achieve petty interests. Dr. Qadeer also said that any attempt to remove this government and install a weak government should be considered an immoral move aimed at damaging Pakistan's nuclear program and that we should try to counter such a move. He said: I am not a politician; nor do I want to start a political debate. I just believe that a weak government could compromise regarding national interests. It would be very unfortunate if any weak government compromises on the nuclear program in the future. Referring to the CTBT talks, he said: I am sure that the prime minister and the armed forces will not compromise on the nuclear program.

Pakistan: Talks With Uzbekistan Seek UNSC Debate on Afghanistan

BK0308120196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan and Uzbekistan are holding intensive negotiations in the wake of a letter from President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan seeking a Security Council debate on Afghanistan and to enforce a general and complete arms embargo on the strife-torn country.

President Karimov in his letter to the president of the Security Council has described the ongoing war in Afghanistan as the most urgent problem of the present time and called upon the international community and the leading powers to pay special attention to this problem.

President Karimov also informed the Security Council president that Uzbekistan and Pakistan would jointly submit a draft Security Council resolution. A senior Pakistani official, however, said that it was too early to comment on this proposition but confirmed that intensive negotiations were now going on between the two countries on this possibility. The Pakistani official, however, pointed out that general and complete arms embargo on Afghanistan, now being proposed by Uzbekistan, was originally sought by Pakistan during the Security Council debate early this year.

Pakistan: Transport Workers End Protest Strike

BK0208133296 Islamabad THE NATION in English 2 Aug 96 pp 1, 9

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rawalpindi — Transporters agreed to call off their crippling country-wide strike Thursday [1 August] evening after the government accepted demands for the withdrawal of several new taxes.

The agreement was reached as the nationwide strike by bus, truck and oil-tankers entered its third day. The decision to call off the strike followed negotiations between the transporters and the government on Thursday evening.

The government side was represented by the Federal Minister [FM], Anwer Saifullah, the personal secretary to FM, Ahmed Sadiq, the adviser to PM [Prime Minister] on economic affairs, V A Jaffrey, and chairman Central Board of Revenue (CBR), Alvi Abdul Rahim, while the 14-member delegation of the Supreme Council of the All Pakistan Transport Association (APTA) was led by MNA [Member of National Assembly] Shahid Nazir and president of the council Akhtar Awan.

Alvi Abdul Rahim, while talking to newsmen after the negotiations, said the government after listening to the demands of the delegation had announced 40 percent reduction in income tax and withholding tax.

The government has also accepted the demand of the transporters regarding exemption of sale and purchase of more than 10 years old trucks and buses from withholding tax. However, he said the government had decided to levy the capital value tax in accordance with the previous ratio.

Shahid Nazir, the representative of the transporters, said "The government has accepted all our major demands."

The representatives of the transporters, who simultaneously held negotiations in the federal capital and Sindh metropolis, told reporters that the capital value tax (CVT) has been reduced by 40 percent. "We have assured the government that the owners not paying road tax will be forced to do so, bringing in additional income to the national exchequer," Shahid Nazir said.

The three-day strike had caused major disruptions nationwide, as trucks and public buses stayed off the roads, suspending deliveries and prompting low office attendance by commuters.

The tankers' strike also triggered severe fuel shortages in major cities. Many petrol stations exhausted their stocks said long queues were witnessed early Thursday at filling stations in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

In Lahore, petrol pumps had to ration fuel sales to 10 liters per private car, residents said. The flow of produce and other commodities into urban markets and wholesale dealers was also hit.

Peshawar: A few incidents of police-transporters clashes took place on Thursday morning resulting in arrest of eight persons.

The main encounter took place near Gulbahar Police Station on GT Road where the protesting transporters were trying to stop private vehicles and rickshaws from plying on the roads by pelting them with stones smashing their wind screens.

Long queues of vehicles were seen at some petrol pumps belonging to PSO [expansion unknown] due to the fuel shortage in the province.

Quetta: All the major business centres and markets remained closed throughout the day while the public transport, including the buses, coaches, vans and oil tankers remained off the roads on the third consecutive day.

Heavy contingents of police and other law enforcement agencies were deployed on the route from airport to the Governor's House to deny the transporters any opportunity to wave the black flags and chant anti-government slogans on the arrival of prime minister in the provincial metropolis.

Karachi: The Sindh Chief Minister [CM], Abdullah Shah, on behalf of the federal government, held talks with the representatives of the transporters here Thursday and announced to withdraw the CVT. The CM also assured early release of transporters arrested during last three days in the province.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Foreign Minister Sees Problems With Economic Liberalization

BK0408112696 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 4 Aug 96

[Report by Jayantha Sri Nissanka—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Financial liberalisation in developing countries could result in vulnerability of their economies due to foreign influence by opening the doors to destabilising movements of short term foreign funds that flow into stock exchanges to make quick speculative gains, Foreign Minister Lakhsman Kadirgamar said.

Addressing the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) Annual General Meeting last week the Minister said that today stock market analysts worldwide are linked through a network of computers because of the technological revolution and transactions are carried out often on their own momentum without the intervention of state regulatory mechanisms. This has led to "unleashing of capital markets" in rapidly liberalising global bazaars of investment.

He said that this "hot money" phenomenon due to the globalisation concept is responsible for the unprecedented crisis in Mexico and impending problems in Brazil and Chile. Therefore, developing countries find it increasingly difficult to resist globalisation on the one hand and deliver positive and less painful economic policies on the other hand.

Inter-dependence of economic activity would also send financial and economic shocks from one country to another. The Stock market crash in 1987 and crisis of the 1980s in the world continued to affect economic development adversely and created economic upheavals in a number of developing countries, he added.

Ceylon Chamber's outgoing Chairman Channa Gunesinghe said that all economic indicators currently reflect the perilous picture of the economy. The stock market which had buoyant conditions in the past where foreign investors, foreign funds, corporate and individuals aggressively competed to acquire shares has now considerably decreased due to the prevailing situation in the country.

He said that unprojected government expenditure coupled with other fiscal slippages has increased the GDP budget deficit from 7.9 percent to 9.6 percent. Power shortage and labour unrest are sapping out the industrial growth and the agricultural production adversely.

He said that CCC is committed to promote a balanced view regarding labour. Employers and employees should be aware of their respective rights and obligations. The formulation of labour laws should not be tilted in favour of either side and the primary need is to increase the productivity and quality which will benefit both employee and employer.

Mr. Gunesinghe said the existing slow process of settling labour disputes should be reviewed and it is also essential that the support of trade unions is obtained for national development.

Since 1993 growth rates have declined from 6.9 percent to 5.45 percent in 1994. This slowing down has been reflected in all the areas namely agriculture, industry and services. Sri Lanka's balance of payments after five consecutive years of surpluses recorded a deficit of SDR [Special Drawing Rights] of 62 million in 1995 mainly due to the decline in private capital inflows, he added.

He said that the only heartening factor was that exports fared reasonably well having benefited from good prices in the world market and also the depreciation of exchange rate.

Foreign direct investments dropped to the extent of one third of the level of 1994 mainly due to labour unrest, political instability and uncertain domestic conditions.

He said that CCC has made representations against the introduction of the Preshipment Inspection Scheme. Instead of facilitating this trade scheme only imposes delays and other difficulties for the private sector.

Mr. Gunesinghe welcomed the move towards free trade in the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] region by the turn of the century. However he expressed reservations about consequences of integrating the region into a single market and lowering of tariffs may create immediate problems in Sri Lanka while competing with large nations such as Pakistan and India.

CCC new Chairman Mano Selvanathan stressed upon the need to formulate a policy to kick start the economy by increasing production within a short period like six months.

He said that Sri Lankan policy planners should study the Singapore model for infrastructure development in detail. The Singapore economy is largely led by its property and infrastructure development which in turn is led by the government owned Urban Development Authority (UDA) to attract foreign investments.

He said that here too UDA and the private sector should work together to redevelop old properties and improve infrastructure facilities which would help to attract foreign investments.

Sri Lanka: Foreign Minister Briefs British MP's on Ethnic Problem

BK0308145196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 3 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A delegation from the British-Sri Lanka all parliamentary group recently called on Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike. The delegation comprising Messrs. James Hill, MP; David Young, MP; Roger Sims, MP; and Lord (Bradzel), MP, were in Colombo on a goodwill tour on invitation of Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar. The group also called on ministers — G.L. Peiris, Clement Gooneratne, Kingsley Wickremaranta, opposition leader Ranil Wickremasinghe, and Deputy Speaker Anil Munasinghe.

The delegation expressed their appreciation of the government's peace efforts based on the devolution process and condemned terrorism perpetrated against them. Foreign Minister Kadirgamar appreciated the British Government's understanding and support extended to the peace efforts and to the northern reconstruction activities. He also welcomed investments from British companies and hoped they would be increased. Minister Kadirgamar briefed the delegation on the recent political developments and the initiatives taken by the government to reach a viable solution to the ongoing ethnic problem.

Sri Lanka: Second Phase of Anti-LTTE Operation Sathjaya Launched

BK0408120796 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 4 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Troops of Operation Sathjaya commenced the second phase of the offensive against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists early this morning. Troops continued to advance further in a southerly direction from Paranthan in the north. They were given support by artillery and air cover. Operational Headquarters of the Defense Ministry told the SLBC that the Air Force engaged terrorist locations. Troops have advanced about 1.5 km so far. Columns of armor are also moving alongside the infantry. Troops continue to advance amidst resistance. Terrorists continue to offer resistance with mortars, RPG's [rocket-propelled grenades] and small arms. Phase two of Operation Sathjaya continues.

Operation Sathjaya launched on 26 July from the Elephant Pass base to destroy LTTE's stronghold in Kilinochchi in the north is in the process of consolidating its current gains on the eighth day today. Forty-two rebels were killed and 16 army personnel have also lost their lives since the beginning of the operation. The rebels are reported to be using mortar fire continuously while troops retaliated with artillery and mortar fire. The troops have cleared many mines and booby traps during the search operations carried out in the newly captured area in Paranthan. There were no casualties among the security forces yesterday. Operation Sathjaya continues.

Sri Lanka: Troops Recover Large Stock of Weapons in Paranthan

BK0208114996 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Troops of Operation Sathjaya continue to consolidate their positions in the liberated areas in Paranthan. They are engaged in clearing the area of land mines and booby traps. During a search operation, troops recovered a large stock of Arul grenades, Claymore mines, antipersonnel mines, and hand grenades. The operation continues.

Yesterday, at Erallali, in the Valikkamam division, a bullock cart was (?shot) up in a terrorist pressure mine explosion, killing three civilians and injuring another. On information provided by civilians, troops recovered six automatic rifles, 400 rounds of ammunition, five grenades, and three cyanide capsules at Tirunelveli yesterday.

Sri Lanka: Government, Relief Agencies Prepare For Refugees

BK0408112496 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 4 Aug 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Government and non-governmental relief agencies are gearing up to meet the needs of the nearly two hundred thousand people believed to have been newly displaced in the recently intensified fighting in the Vanni region.

Relief officials in Colombo and in the north were unable to provide exact details of the number of people affected but said that they were anticipating the need to cater to a very large number of displaced civilians in the Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya districts.

Government officials in Colombo said they were aware of the problem and were awaiting detailed information from the affected areas so that relief plans could be prepared and implemented. "We are ready to respond once we know the numbers involved and the location of the civilians," one official told the "Sunday Observer".

The large body of some 100,000 refugees from the Jaffna Peninsula, who had been in camps in the Kilinochchi area, have reportedly abandoned the area in anticipation of fighting in that sector. The residents of Kilinochchi, numbering several thousands, have also abandoned the town, according to reports reaching Colombo.

The intense fighting in the Mullaitivu area earlier has also compelled the residents as well as groups of refugees staying there to abandon their homes and camps, reports indicated.

Officials in the north said that the total number of newly displaced in the Vanni could reach 200,000.

Tamil political sources in Colombo warned, however, that the number of civilians fleeing fighting in the Vanni region could swell to up to 300,000 as people abandoned homes and refugee camps. They said that people had scattered in various directions and were taking shelter in the jungles of the area.

Relief officials said that because groups of civilians were fleeing in different directions and people were in areas with little communication, there was difficulty in obtaining information quickly.

The immediate requirements are expected to be food and materials for shelters — mainly cadjans.

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